

In the **Twilight** **of the Revolution**

Kwandiwe Kondlo

*The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa)
1959–1994*



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In the Twilight of the Revolution

Kwandiwe Kondlo

Introduction by Patrick Harries

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The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa)

1959–1994

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2nd edition 2010

Basler Afrika Bibliographien
Namibia Resource Centre & Southern Africa Library
Klosterberg 23
PO Box 2037
CH 4051 Basel
Switzerland
www.baslerafrika.ch

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Cover Design: Petra Kerckhoff (Basler Afrika Bibliographien)
Book designed by Local Legends Design (Cape Town)

Printed by Medium d.o.o., Slovenia



Printed on paper certified as FSC (Forest Stewardship Council),
that guarantees well managed forest management.

ISBN Switzerland: 978-3-905758-12-2

CONTENTS

The Long Revolution of the PAC	
An Introduction by Patrick Harries	XI
Acknowledgements	1
Introduction	3
The Structure and Contents of the Book	9
1 Sources in the Study of the History of the PAC	15
Research methodology	15
Research ethics	16
The state of sources	17
Primary documentary sources	17
Oral sources	26
Electronic/Visual sources	29
Summary	29
2 Historiographic Overview	31
3 The PAC: Formation, Banishment and Road to Exile	49
Factors which led to the formation of the PAC	49
International ideological influences	49
Local factors which led to the formation of the PAC	53
Internal conflicts within the ANC	55
Highlights of the day of the inauguration of the PAC	58
Principles and strategies enshrined in the organisation's basic documents	60
Banishment and road to exile	63

4 The Exile Experience: Impact on the Functioning of Liberation Movements	70
Conceptual and theoretical issues	71
The exile environment: An overview	74
The Frontline States and the OAU in the Southern African liberation struggle	77
The emergence of the “Frontline States Phenomenon”	77
Profiles of the Frontline States	80
<i>Tanzania and Zambia</i>	81
<i>The BLS States – Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland</i>	83
<i>Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe</i>	85
The South African offensive in Southern Africa	87
Superpowers and the conflict in Southern Africa	90
The “experience” of liberation movements	92
 5 The Reconstitution of the PAC as a Liberation Movement in Diaspora (1960–1963)	 99
The reconstitution of PAC leadership structures in exile	104
Development of strategy documents	106
The practice of self-reliance by PAC exiles in Lesotho	108
Developments in other parts of the world	110
The PAC and the ANC – the South African United Front	113
 6 The Generation of Strained Intra-PAC Relations in Exile (1962–1990)	 117
 6A The Leballo Era and its Immediate Aftermath (1962–1981)	 120
The period of Potlake Kitchener Leballo (1962–1979)	120
P.K. Leballo: Background and profile	120
The composition and role of the exile leadership as represented by the National Executive Committee	123
A foretaste of things to come – expulsions from the PAC	128
The Moshi “Unity” Conference – effects on the PAC	131

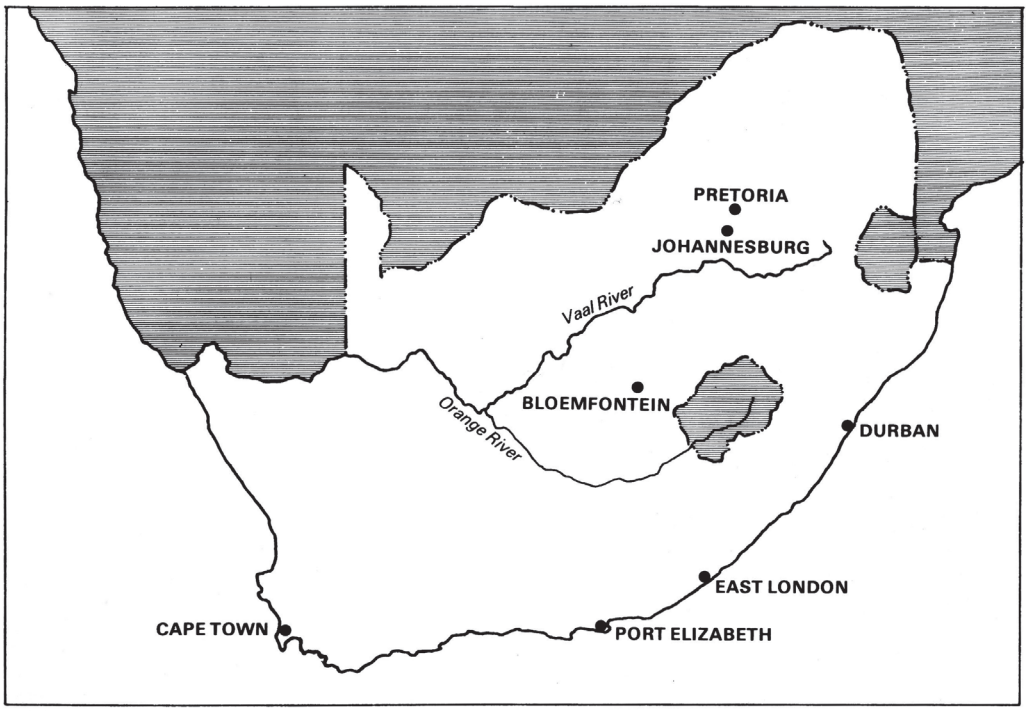
The internal “enemy syndrome”, 1962–1979	132
The management of funds and other resources	135
The end of the Leballo period	139
The murder of David Sibeko	142
The period of Vusumzi Make (1979–1981)	144
V. Make: Background and profile	144
The composition and role of the exile leadership as represented by the National Executive Committee	145
The internal “enemy syndrome”	150
The management, use of funds and other resources	152
 6B The Revival of the PAC: From John Nyathi Pokela to Johnson Mlambo (1981–1990)	 156
The period of John Nyathi Pokela (1981–1985)	156
J.N. Pokela: Background and profile	156
The composition and role of the exile leadership as represented by the National Executive Committee	158
The internal “enemy syndrome”	170
Pokela re-organises the PAC	175
The period of Johnson Mlambo (1985–1990)	179
J. Mlambo: Background and profile	179
The composition and role of the exile leadership as represented by the National Executive Committee	181
Management, use of funds and other resources	189
The internal “enemy syndrome”	194
The impact of leadership diversity on the PAC	198
 7 The PAC Camps: A Case Study of Ruvu Camp in Tanzania	 202
The formative years of Ruvu Camp (1978–1984)	209
Ruvu Camp beyond 1984	212
Health conditions inside Ruvu Camp	214
Aspects of culture and leisure among camp residents	216
“Tribal”/ “ethnic” tensions among residents of Ruvu Camp	221
Forms of punishment in the camp	224

8 The Evolution of the PAC's Military Strategy (1961–1993)	229
The origins of the theory of “revolution” and military strategy	
during the period of <i>Pogo</i> (1961–1967)	232
The slow “death” of <i>Pogo</i> and the rise of APLA	239
APLA's strategic thinking (1969–1978)	246
APLA's command structure up to 1978	248
The “New Road of Revolution”	250
APLA command structure (1979–1990)	251
 9 PAC Unbanned. Dealing with the Negotiated Transition to Democracy (1990–1994)	 257
The PAC on the eve of the unbanning of liberation movements in South Africa	259
The PAC's response to the unbanning of liberation movements	262
The PAC and the negotiated political settlement	264
The PAC and the armed struggle during transitional negotiations	272
Aspects of the PAC's vision of a non-racial democratic society	276
The land question	276
Development and economic growth	279
Nationalisation	280
Foreign investment	281
 Conclusions	 285
 Acronyms	 296
List of Illustrations	297
Bibliography	299
Index	325

AFRICA



SOUTH AFRICA



The Long Revolution of the PAC.

An Introduction by Patrick Harries

I met Kwandiwe Merriman Kondlo more than twenty years ago. As part of the reforms brought to apartheid in the mid-1980s by the government of P.W. Botha, black students were allowed to enter the liberal universities in greater numbers. Kwandiwe Kondlo pioneered this new encounter as black students, often from deep rural areas or urban ghettos, joined the student body at institutions like the University of Cape Town (UCT). These students were too few to transform the university but they were sufficiently vocal to make a deep impression on its traditions. At a time when police invaded the campus and military helicopters buzzed its main arteries, this sudden wave of black students enriched the university with a range of new experiences and concerns. They also pushed scholarship in a more Africanist direction through their participation in tutorials, lectures and seminars. Kwandiwe Kondlo's M.A. thesis pressed the study of urban history in directions that had first been investigated by Archie Mafeje some twenty years earlier. After graduating, he went on to teach at the University of Transkei under the skilful guidance of Professor Jeff Peires. New demands and opportunities in the mid-nineties called him to work for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the government department dealing with land reform. He later moved into the private sector but kept his ties to the academic world. During these years he developed a close relationship with the University of Basel in Switzerland where he lectured on several occasions. These contacts soon extended to the Basler Afrika Bibliographien (BAB) and, when he completed his PhD at the University of Johannesburg in 2003, it seemed natural that it should be published by the BAB. As such, this book is the product of both a deeply rooted, South African scholarship and a fruitful South-North partnership.

Readers will quickly become aware that *In the Twilight of the Revolution* fills an important gap in the literature. During the apartheid years, historians paid little attention to the history of the liberation movements. The exile experience seemed far removed from historians' concerns with the causes of apartheid and with the urban uprisings and worker organisations that drove internal politics. Besides, fieldwork on exiled political movements was impossible in a time of war and historians saw government prohibit their meagre publications on the subject. In 1987 one of the doyens of South African history, T.R.H. Davenport, spent little more than one page on "black movements in exile and the start of the terrorist campaign" in the third edition of his *South Africa: A Modern History*. The transition to democracy brought a radical reversal to this situation. In the wake of

the African National Congress' (ANC) victory in the 1994 elections, South Africa had a sudden need to understand the organisation, structure and history of movements long excluded from the narrative of the nation's past. Professional historians and participants in the struggle soon produced a wave of articles, books and reflections on the liberation movements that had become political parties overnight. Much of this literature introduced South Africans to the leaders of the exiled political movements, to the logic behind the armed struggle, and to the eminently rational ways in which it was pursued. But the literature was dominated by the victor's perspective and concentrated almost exclusively on the history of the African National Congress. When historians mentioned the Pan African Congress (PAC), it was often to dismiss the 'fratricidal tensions and opportunism' that beset the movement, almost from its beginning. Reading back from the party's poor electoral results in the post-apartheid years, historians gave little place to the PAC in the history of the struggle for freedom in South Africa. Kwandiwe Kondlo's book goes a long way towards correcting this view.

Dr Kondlo uses PAC documents and veterans' memories to produce an innovative history of the movement. As the nephew of Gerald Kondlo, the first leader of the Azanian Peoples' Liberation Army (APLA), he has had privileged access to the memories of veterans of the armed struggle. His interviews take readers into the hidden recesses of the movement's history and bring to their attention the very human drama involved in the long revolution undertaken by the PAC. His story follows recruits as they made their way out of the country, built a new life in exile, and committed themselves to the overthrow of a powerful, western-backed government. But in the process of recounting the PAC's history, Dr Kondlo is less concerned with praising the party than with subjecting it to a thorough and penetrating analysis. In the process, he makes no attempt to conjure up the picture of a noble, enforced departure; nor does he produce a romanticized picture of exile that, like the Israelites in Babylon or the Trojans in Western Europe, might contribute to the construction of an imagined community. Because conventional national archives leave out those who have left, or treat the experience of exile as fleeting and transitory, or as an anomaly, much of the archival material consulted by Dr Kondlo was constituted in exile. This has led him to comb institutional and private archives in several parts of South Africa and Europe. In the process, he has produced the first academically reputable history of the PAC from its turbulent beginning in 1959 to the twilight years of the revolution that ended in 1994.

His story is filled with the trials and tribulations of a breakaway movement that, in exile in the early 1960s, attempted to establish its credibility as an alternative to the African National Congress. He examines candidly and in close detail the venal compromises

required by the need to secure funding; and he is well aware of the neuroses, distrust and factionalism that formed an almost inevitable part of life in exile. Nor does he shy away from the ideological and personal differences that challenged the movement's unity or the extra-judicial beatings and killings that marked its existence. But he is also careful to describe the ways in which the PAC built itself into a liberation movement. His examination of the Ruvu camp in Bagamoyo district in Tanzania shows how the movement was able to produce and market food and entertain life styles that brought together the new generations of recruits who left South Africa in waves after the Soweto uprising of 1976 and the urban revolts of the mid-1980s. Although these new recruits added generational problems to those of class and ethnicity in the camp, the PAC built Ruvu into a functioning community. Yet, at the same time as the PAC prepared youths in its camps for armed struggle, it ran offices in many parts of the world. On this international front, the movement inveigled funders, won the support of non-aligned countries, and succeeded in internationalizing apartheid as a global, moral problem.

In perhaps the most accomplished chapter in the book, Dr Kondlo looks at the desperate response of the PAC to the strategy unveiled by F.W. de Klerk on 2 February, 1990. As the dialogue between the ANC and government determined the pace and timing of the transfer of power, an increasingly frustrated PAC attempted to impose its will through force of arms. Here he presents an alternative view of F.W. de Klerk to the one normally mounted by historians eager to explain the last white president's alternatively malevolent or bumbling contribution to the 'miracle' that brought about the transition to democracy. In this book F.W. de Klerk is portrayed as an adroit politician who out-manoeuvred the PAC and pressed the ANC into a negotiated settlement. This left economic power in the hands of the white population and allowed them to integrate the new, black élite into their ranks. As Dr Kondlo points out, this has had devastating consequences for the underclasses of South Africa that the PAC claimed to represent. Nevertheless, caught in the spiral of violence that accompanied the fall of apartheid, an increasingly divided PAC was forced by an exhausted nation and a hostile international community to join the negotiated settlement in June 1993.

This is a truly transnational history that underlines the debt of so many South Africans to their hosts in the frontline states of southern Africa and elsewhere in the world. It shows that the history of South Africa should not be confined to the experiences of those who live within the frontiers of the country. *In the Twilight of the Revolution* brings the history of an exile group onto the central stage of South African history and, in so doing, opens new methodological and thematic trails for scholars. In providing a valuable transnational model, this book indicates how South Africans could write the history of exile

communities in their own country in new and original ways. Looking at transnational experiences could revise the ways historians of South Africa write about forced migrants such as slaves, political refugees such as French Huguenots or German Jews or, equally, Mozambican or Cornish mineworkers driven to South Africa by the deprivations of their existence at home. In summary, this book brings alive a vitally import, hidden aspect of South Africa's history – but it also shows how a transnational approach can open up new ways of writing about the country's history.

Basel, October 2009

Acknowledgements

A book, even though written and attributed to one author, is never the product of an individual. It is the result of collective endeavours in the form of influences and personalities who make direct and indirect contributions to one's thinking. Many people, whom I may not have the space or time to catalogue, made immense contributions to the completion of this piece of work.

I wish to thank Professor Tom Lodge whose initial advice, whilst I was still a researcher in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission helped to focus my ideas on the identification of the precise research area and examined my initial ideas about the study. Prof. Grietjie Verhoef supervised this work when it was a PhD thesis. Her superb analytical skill challenged my earlier prosaic efforts and forced me to face, directly, the critical issues.

Professor Patrick Harries rekindled the spark in my academic career when he encouraged me to proceed with my studies to enrol for a PhD. I had decided to change career direction and study law. I want to thank him for his advice and the opportunity to visit the Basle University in Switzerland to present papers relating to the contemporary history and politics of South Africa. This provided me with an opportunity to test my views on the subject of this book and helped me to sharpen my ideas about the research topic.

I thank Professor Charles Villa-Vicencio for the opportunity to serve on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), as a Research Specialist, to deal with the subject of liberation movements and human rights abuses in exile. It was in the context of the TRC work that I identified a topic for my PhD thesis and later transformed it into a book.

Professor Herbert Vilakazi and Dr Manelisi Genge spent time reading my drafts. Their comments and suggestions were very useful. This book would not have been completed without the sharp editorial eye of Prof. Louis Jeevanantham. He edited the work while it was still a PhD thesis and continued to do once it was transformed into a book. I thank Prof Gilingwe Mayende for his advice as well as Judith Kalk in improving the quality of my work.

None of these experts, of course, is responsible for my views least of all for *In the Twilight of the Revolution*.

I thank members of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) who made themselves available for interviews during the course of this research. Special thanks go to the leadership of the PAC whose interest in the book is not driven by the intention to influence its content. I thank members of other former liberation movements such as the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) and the African National Congress (ANC), who volunteered information for this research.

My sincere gratitude goes to members of staff at Fort Hare University PAC Archives, as well as to Brian Maaba, a Senior Researcher at the Govan Mbeki Research Institute at Fort Hare. I am extremely indebted to the Democracy and Governance Program at the HSRC. The level of support I received from my staff in the Program cannot be expressed in words. Prof Ivor Chipkin made time to read and advise me on the contents of the very long and most difficult Chapters in the book. Members of staff at the HSRC library were of great support to me.

My family in the Eastern Cape is a wonderful source of strength and encouragement. I cannot omit to single out my late mother, Mabel Kondlo, a woman so near and dear to my heart. She has always supported my academic pursuits in spite of experiencing financial hardships. My father, the late Cabinet Kondlo, indoctrinated us with the love for education; his spirit is the wind beneath my wings. My dear wife and our three children supported me in their own special way. To all my brothers, sisters and cousins (especially Mzameni Jombile who assisted during the fieldwork), I want to say “*mathola maduna omzolapho*” and to the broader clan “*maNgcwangule amahle*”. I have always derived from them a sense of purpose, which gives me strength during turbulent times.

But most of all, I thank God who makes things possible.

Introduction

Not much has been written about the history of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) in a manner which presents a complete and integrated picture of the organisation. There is no complete work examining the history of the PAC from the time it was established in 1959, its period in exile, to its re-establishment as a legal political organisation inside South Africa in 1990. Its role during the “uncertain transition,” 1990 to 1994, has not been dealt with extensively in research works. Yet the PAC is one of the oldest liberation movements in South Africa. It was an important role-player during the liberation struggle, which was recognised during the exile period as one of the two authentic voices of the people of South Africa (the other was the African National Congress – ANC) by international bodies such as the United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU – now the African Union, AU). In fact, without a complete story of the PAC, it is difficult to conclude a credible story of national liberation in South Africa.

The fact that the story of the PAC has existed in the form of isolated, fragmented and sometimes discrete pieces of work creates difficulties for readers to access the full picture of the organisation’s history, creating gaps in our understanding of the 20th century history of liberation movements and the liberation struggle in South Africa and in particular the exile politics of former liberation movements.

The dominant historical narrative in South Africa’s liberation struggle historiography is that of the victors, the ANC and its alliance partners. This needs to change, lest the next generation of scholars accuse us of tendentious scholarship. The liberation struggle in South Africa produced many liberation movements, among them the Pan Africanist Congress as well as other organisations such as the New Unity Movement, the Azanian People’s Organisation etc. The liberation struggle also produced heroes and heroines who were not members of the ANC. Some of them are mentioned in this book, but others will need to be recuperated into the mainstream of historical knowledge and memory of post-apartheid South Africa. The book, based on a D.Litt et Phil thesis submitted in 2003 to the Department of Historical Studies at the University of Johannesburg, is an attempt to fill these gaps in our historical knowledge of the liberation struggle in South Africa. Even though inadvertently, it seeks to reverse the historical marginalization of “other” heroes and heroines and “other” liberation movements whose stories now sit on the sidelines of history. Their stories are not included as part of significant national collective memory simply because their organisations performed poorly in the elections of 1994 and those of subsequent years.

The main focus of the book is on the PAC. It attempts to present a comprehensive history of this organisation. It covers the period immediately preceding its formation and proceeds to examine its foundation moment, its banishment, exile and the period after the organisation was unbanned in 1990. It undertakes to reconstruct missing aspects of the history of the PAC and to provide a “window” into the clandestine life and politics of exile liberation movements in Southern Africa.

The exile history of the Pan Africanist Congress is located within a broader framework of political developments in Southern Africa. By doing so it depicts a wide canvas of factors contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the period of exile (1960-1990). The details of how the PAC functioned, various leadership periods and their impact on the organisation, contentious issues which generated strain within the organisation, the way in which it dealt with the exile environment and continued with the ‘revolution’ despite all its internal problems, are covered.

A crucial period overlooked by both existing scholarly works and popular literature, that of 1960–1962, is carefully examined in the book. This was the most difficult three-year period in the history of liberation movements such as the ANC, PAC and the South African Communist Party. These organisations all had to re-establish themselves outside South Africa, operate clandestinely and strengthen underground operations inside South Africa. It saw the re-formation of the PAC’s official infrastructure in Lesotho and the strengthening of its underground structures and operations inside South Africa. PAC headquarters were moved from Lesotho to Tanzania during this time. It was in Tanzania that the “great internal conflict” surfaced and crippled the organisation. The sources of the conflict were wide and diverse. These took on different manifestations during various periods of leadership, i.e. P.K. Leballo (1962–1979), Vusumzi Make (1979–1981), Nyathi John Pokela (1981–1985) and Johnson Mlambo (1985-1990). The control of funds, conditions inside PAC camps and the PAC’s military strategy were among the sources of conflict even though diluted by and integrated with a wide variety of factors such as personalities and competition for positions of leadership. The factor that permeated the PAC’s problems was its lack of a united leadership and solid organisational foundations. This manifested itself in the lack of clear organisational policies recognized and respected by its members, including the leadership.

The crucial period 1990-1994 has not been investigated in any depth by scholars in terms of research and analysis. This is the period during which many of the difficulties our democracy is currently experiencing, can be located. It was indeed a period of stress for liberation movements such as the PAC and the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania, later absorbed into AZAPO (1990). Lacking the international connections and

support networks the ANC enjoyed, the period of unbanning and transitional negotiations proved a bruising one. This period began in the late 1980s, the years of perestroika and glasnost, the “end of history”¹. The terrain of struggle shifted and in doing so undermined the PAC’s founding vocabulary and strategies. With the collapse of “communism” in Eastern Europe, new winds of change swept through global politics giving rise to talks of a negotiated solution to the liberation struggle in South Africa.

As will be discussed in Chapter 9, the PAC found it difficult to change. The organisation defined its own position on negotiations as far back as 1988, but this was broad and indeed unrealistic. The ANC position was more nuanced and realistic, given the support it received from its wide network of relations with factions of capital, which were part of the ANC’s united front strategy. Both organisations were unprepared for their unbanning in 1990. When talks about talks began, they found themselves facing a strategic cul-de-sac. The swiftness of FW De Klerk’s moves and the strategic capabilities of his regime surprised the liberation movements and indeed, pushed them into a corner. It was the moral appeal of the cause of national liberation, rather than the transformation agenda of the ANC and its alliance partners, which eventually led to its political victory. Political victory was the only public good which emerged from the “elite consensus”² upon which the present settlement in South Africa is based. Factions of capital and the non-racial political elites agreed on political freedoms, which should frame the new ideological context for a deracialized capitalism. This underlined the essence of the deal that emerged from the 1990-1994 negotiations. It defined the foundations and acted as the glue holding together the “second” Republic post-April 1994.

The PAC was dispensable even before the April 1994 elections. Its record whilst in exile did not contribute to its strength. After it was unbanned, its commitment to the armed struggle and its militant populism failed to resonate with the majority of South Africans. The PAC was not in a position to either bolster the voice of the “radicals” within the ANC alliance at the negotiations, or provide a viable counter-position to the compromises the ANC was making; this contributed to the concessions and guarantees De Klerk was able to get from the ANC, now enshrined in the property clause of the South African Constitution. The severe socio-economic compromises liberation movements made during the transitional negotiations unveiled the strategic cul-de sac they had reached during this period. At one point things seemed very difficult for the ANC, which had committed

¹ F. Fukuyama: *The End of History and the Last Man*, Free Press, New York, 1992.

² The point is also made by P. Kagwanja: ‘Introduction: Uncertain democracy – elite fragmentation and the disintegration of the nationalist consensus in South Africa’ in P. Kagwanja and K. Kondlo: *State of the Nation, South Africa, 2008*, HSRC Press, Pretoria, 2009.

itself to the suspension of the armed struggle in the midst of what appeared to be state sponsored violence in the black townships. The organisation struggled to link the strategic vision and manoeuvres of the leadership with the militancy of the masses, particularly the township youth. The iconic stature of Nelson Mandela was a major help during this period. His leadership, often cast in a messianic mode, was useful to calm and eventually quell what could have become a popular insurrection in South Africa.

The period 1990-1994, exposed the ANC and the PAC to South Africans and the rest of the world. The unbanning dispelled the myths about liberation movements who now had to show their resourcefulness openly in “free public” spaces contested by other political parties. Whereas the ANC was able to swim through the rough tides of this period, the PAC seemed to move from one strategic blunder to the next. This book explains the reasoning behind what appeared to be strategic blunders by the PAC. It demonstrates the heterogeneity of views within the organisation as well as policy positions proposed by some leading intellectuals within the PAC.

From the analysis one can deduce the story of the PAC as one of courage and hope, yet it is also a magnifying glass through which one can see how African people were disappointed by South African liberation movements. It is not only the disappointing failures of the PAC to wage a successful national liberation struggle or win the 1994 elections, but also the disappointing consequences of a negotiated national liberation which continues to dash the hopes of many African people, hence, the title of the book, *In the Twilight of the Revolution*. The liberal democracy that has emerged fails to address deepseated socio-economic inequalities. This haunts the “soul” of post-Apartheid South Africa. South Africa’s “soul” continues to be ravaged by “striving and strife”³ due to the unfulfilled aspirations of the African majority for freedom. Joe Slovo provided a theoretical context to explain the situation when he argued in his article, “Negotiations: What Room for Compromise?” that “the balance of forces” in which the Apartheid state was not “a defeated enemy” and “where a revolutionary seizure of power” had not occurred, necessitated “compromises” which amounted to a “sunset clause” scenario⁴. The sunset clause scenario Slovo alludes to, infers a tactical retreat by the liberation struggle; a situation of deferment of revolutionary hopes; the deferment of a radical programme of national liberation. One may call it a situation of surrender with the hope of securing

³ The phrase is used by C. Villa-Vicencio: *The RDP of the soul: building a character of positive values*, in O. Edigheji (ed): *Rethinking South Africa's Development Path: Reflections on the ANC's Policy Conference Discussion Documents, Policy Issues and Actors*, Vol. 20, No., 10, Centre for Policy Studies, Johannesburg, 2007, p.150.

⁴ Quoted in D.T McKinley: *The ANC and the liberation struggle: A critical political biography*, Pluto Press, London, 1997, p.127.

grounds for victory over time. Hence the “elite middle-ground consensus” emerged as a foundation for the post-apartheid political settlement.

It is not that this negotiated settlement was without virtue, but it left key questions critical to economic inclusivity and social equality unresolved. The freedoms enshrined in the South African Constitution remain notional as long as the historically excluded black majority lacks the material wherewithal to realize them in practice. The exclusion of the masses of African people from the economy and the firm grip of largely white domestic and foreign economic interests continues unabated. The economic power of predominantly “white” big capital in South Africa acts as a residue that is beyond the transforming capabilities of post-liberation “emancipatory praxis”.⁵

Perhaps one of the vexing questions the next generation may have to debate is whether the “success” of the ANC in brokering a deal with the white minority regime, a deal which foreclosed the continuation of a people’s war for the seizure of power, meant “victory or surrender”. The question is a vexing one given the fact that it requires not a simplistic “either-or” response. On the positive side, formal political inequalities and white political domination have been removed; on the negative, “the entrenched racial economic injustices”⁶ and exploitation continue unabated. The material dividends of democracy in the new dispensation have not accrued for the poor majority and this situation is likely to continue for generations to come. Hence the gap between the rich and poor continues to increase leaving South Africa, fifteen years after the advent of democracy, among the most highly unequal societies in the world. White domination in its institutionalised form may have been removed, disparities in material wealth continue to widen in a way that threatens democratic consolidation.

I have only briefly discussed the pragmatism of Robert Mugabe during the period 1990–1994. He and other leaders of African states supported the negotiations process and quashed the PAC’s attempts to unsettle transitional negotiations through the continuation of the armed struggle. Robert Mugabe is said to claim that he lost the liberation of his people during the Lancaster House negotiations. Did he believe that negotiations would yield something different in South Africa? Or did African countries believe history had really ended, as Francis Fukuyama has argued in his widely published and influential book, “The End of History and the Last Man”⁷, following the developments in global politics after the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe.

⁵ The terminology originates from the pioneering work of Ernesto Laclau: *Emancipations*, Verso Publishers, London and New York, 2007, p. 2.

⁶ P. Kagwanja: Introduction: Uncertain democracy – elite fragmentation and the disintegration of the “nationalist consensus”, in South Africa, in P.Kagwanja and K. Kondlo (eds): *State of the Nation, South Africa 2008*, HSRC Press, 2009, Pretoria, p. xviii.

⁷ F. Fukuyama: *The End of History and the Last Man*, Free Press, 1989.

My analysis draws the conclusion that the PAC lacked the resources of organisational history and traditions to strengthen its strategic capabilities of organisational resilience. The PAC needed a leader of Robert Sobukhwe's calibre. Sobukhwe, the key brains behind the formation and development of the philosophy of the PAC was separated from it at an early stage. He was arrested and spent his jail term on Robben Island and was later kept under house arrest until he died in 1978. During this period the organisation fell into the reckless hands of people unable to channel its radical ideological energy into carefully selected strategic initiatives in exile and inside South Africa. There was, of course, a short period of improvement, but the damage that had been done needed a much longer period to repair.

Without eulogising Sobukhwe and his leadership role in the PAC, quite clearly the young organisation needed him even more in the early 1960s when it was banned. This is the man who even pro-apartheid government columnists like Aida Parker described: "when you enter, as you talk to him, you gain much the same impression of power, of leadership, as you do when with South Africa's Prime Minister Verwoerd"⁸. The *New York Times* writer Anthony Lewis commented, "a few times in his life a reporter meets a political figure and senses authentic greatness: a magnetic external presence combined with a sense of inner serenity"⁹. According to Barry Streek, "when Sobukwe spoke, Africanism made sense"¹⁰. Young organisations often depend on the leadership credentials and qualities of founders before they become sustainable on their own. This was the case with the PAC. Over the entire exile period, the organisation was sustained by documents developed by its founders. Key among these was the Pan Africanist Manifesto developed by Robert Sobukhwe and AP Mda. It lays the philosophical direction of South Africa's Pan-Africanism. The document remains unchanged to the present time. It reveals the PAC's dependence on its original founders under Sobukhwe's leadership. The force and attraction of ideological content, based on African nationalism kept the PAC strong during the exile period. The structure and organisational capacity was, however, severely affected by years of internal conflict. When the PAC was unbanned in 1990, it was already manifesting internal strife and needed time to deal with these matters.

I do not pretend to have covered in a comprehensive way the entire panorama of PAC politics, rather I have examined those areas that are crucial in the history and development of the PAC. Important issues not covered here may be included in the second edition of this book. My perspective, part historical and part philosophical in its polemic, bears my own imprint in the body of the text constituting a discursive formation on exile politics.

⁸ B. Streek: Supplement – PAC Unbanned, September 1990, p. 3.

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 3.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 3.

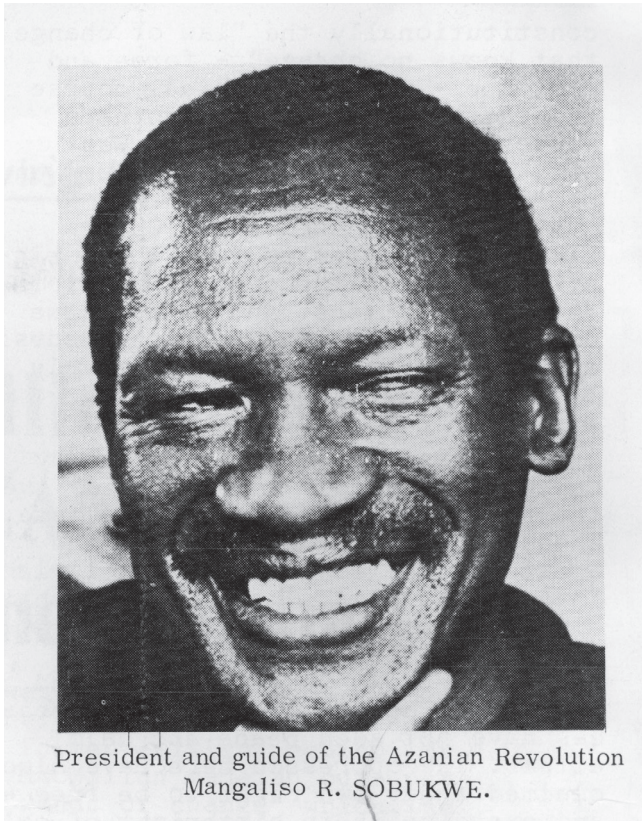


Fig. 1 “The architect of the policies and programmes on which the PAC has been founded”: Mangaliso Robert Sobukhwe (1924–1978).

The Structure and Contents of the Book

The book moves from an examination of broad issues to more specific ones, defining the life and history of the PAC in exile. The first chapter outlines procedures and methods used to identify sources of information, explaining how these have been used and the internal and external weaknesses they display. The chapter exposes the varied and uneven spread of detail in the primary documentary sources. To overcome this problem, oral sources were used to complement primary documentary sources. The weaknesses of oral sources are examined.

Chapters 1 and 2 expose methodological difficulties facing scholars in their quest to create a cogent history out of this period. The story of the PAC and the liberation struggle in South Africa is not static, not least because of the new materials, often from diaries and other disclosures, entering the story.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the literature, both academic and popular on the exile political history of the PAC. The chapter outlines the way in which the exile history

of the PAC is portrayed in particular sources. The historiographic approach identifies schools of thought and typologies based on the lines of argument identified in these sources. It is difficult to group the literature on the PAC during the exile period into distinct historical epochs. This attests to the fact that the historiography of the PAC is still in its infancy. It is not well developed because little has been written about the PAC to date. Reference to schools of thought or tendencies is an attempt to uncover the underlying grid, which allows thinking about the PAC (as expressed in the literature) to organize itself.

Chapter 3 deals with the question of “exile experience” and its impact on the functioning of liberation movements. The section does not provide much detail, but extrapolates generalisations, which constitute a paradigm against which the experiences of the PAC are later examined. It seeks to answer the question of how the exile experience impacted on the functioning of liberation movements. The aim is to develop a comprehensive view of exile liberation movements and locate the exile history of the PAC within that framework. The section demonstrates that the exile experience possessed a comprehensible structure. It defines the connecting threads and weaves together seemingly discrete elements of exile experience into an intelligible whole. Firstly, it examines the nature of the exile environment with the main focus on Southern Africa. Secondly, the conceptualisation of experience as an analytical category, the common experiences of liberation movements and their responses and adaptation to the exile environment are analysed. Lastly, an overview of the impact of the exile experience on the functioning of these movements provides a framework for the analysis of the way in which the PAC dealt with the experiences of exile during this period.

Chapter 4 deals with the formation of the PAC, its banishment and the road to exile. It examines three important aspects of the history of the PAC. These include the factors which led to the birth of an “Africanist” tendency within the African National Congress and the formation of the PAC in 1959. It considers the circumstances that led to the banning of the organisation by the National Party government of South Africa and shows how it eventually led to exile. An analysis of international African politics and the way this affected developments within the ANC of South Africa provides a starting point. Moving from the general to the specific, the chapter traces and uncovers all factors, both international and local, (as well as internal conflicts within the ANC), which led to the formation of the PAC. It analyses major events during the time of inauguration of the PAC (4–6 of April 1959) and shows how the organisation defined itself and crafted its mission from its early beginnings. This section exposes the simmering divisions and initial cracks that exacerbated internal divisions within the PAC during the exile period. It con-

cludes with an examination of the positive action campaign in March 1960, which led to the banning of both the ANC and the PAC.

Chapter 5 examines the reconstitution of the PAC as a liberation movement in the diaspora. The chapter focuses on 1960-1962, a period previously neglected in existing literature and research and examines the process of reconstruction and the various forms of conflict operating at various levels within the PAC. It outlines the structures that were put in place, and the initial sources of funding. The nucleus where the official PAC was re-constituted was Maseru, Lesotho, which remained the energy centre of the PAC until the end of 1963, when the PAC headquarters were moved to Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania. Even though this chapter examines the formation of the PAC as a liberation movement in Lesotho, it is mindful of PAC developments in other parts of the world. The chapter examines strategic documents developed by the PAC leadership to guide the “new” organisation in order to accomplish its goals. Other initiatives include the self-reliance programmes developed by PAC members in Lesotho in an attempt to eke out a living in a “foreign” country. Political initiatives are examined. Among these was the formation of the South African United Front (SAUF) with the ANC in June 1960. Even though it preceded the launch of an official PAC organ in 1962, the Lesotho-based PAC group played an important role in the formation of the South African United Front.

Chapter 6 comprises two sections and is divided into Chapters 6A and 6B. The first section covers the initial period of leadership under PK Leballo and the short transition period under Vusumzi Make. The second section examines the “revival period” under John Nyathi Pokela and subsequently under Johnson Mlambo. Both sections deal with developments within the PAC during the various phases of leadership in exile. The chapter identifies four periods: the PK Leballo period (1962–1979); the period of Vusumzi Make, (1979–1981); the period of John Nyathi Pokela (1981–1985) and the period of Johnson Mlambo (1985–1990). The examination of developments during these periods is thematic. This orientation is based on available sources, especially internal PAC documentary sources currently housed at the University of Fort Hare PAC archives.

The themes which are identified are: (i) the management of funds and use of organisational resources, (ii) the internal enemy syndrome and (iii) the composition and role of leadership as represented by the PAC Central Committee. The three themes provide critical insights into the reasons relations within the PAC became strained. Each of the four sections examines the growth of intra-PAC relations within the scope of the thematic areas. The analysis in each section is preceded by a brief outline of the background and profile of the leader who chaired the PAC Central Committee during the period under discussion. Each section clearly demonstrates the PAC’s lack of clear policies and

procedures for the management of its affairs, especially in the areas of finance, resource management, control of departments, and management of its general membership. The organisation had no coherent systems, lacked integration and was rocked by internal suspicion and blackmail.

The chapters identify the issues of leadership, poor management and administration of funds as fundamental to the internal conflict. This can be traced back to 1964 when Nana Mahomo and Peter Molotsi (PAC Executive Committee officials who were sent by the PAC President, Robert Sobukhwe, to raise funds in America for the establishment of the international organisation) were required for the first time to account to the organisation for the donor funds which were allegedly being kept in their personal bank accounts.¹¹ The chapter traces a number of similar incidents and outlines the manner in which they were dealt with by the leadership of the organisation. It concludes that the mismanagement of donor funds given to the PAC in support of the liberation struggle, resulted in negative perceptions about the PAC by sections of the international community and generated mistrust among the members of the organisation, especially the leadership and its rank-and-file.

Chapter 7 focuses on the PAC camps or settlements in Tanzania. An analysis of conditions inside PAC camps provides a magnifying glass through which the exile experience of ordinary members of the organisation can be viewed. The chapter traces the development of PAC settlements beginning with Maseru, followed by Leopoldville in the Congo, and Dukwe camp in Botswana. It later focuses on the settlements in Tanzania. The following PAC camps are identified, the Itumbi camp in Mbeya and the Mgagao camp in Iringa, both in Tanzania in the early 1970s, and the Chunya Bush camp a much older PAC settlement. Besides identifying the camps, it examines the living conditions inside the camps as well as their internal organisation. Most importantly, it highlights how limited resources in the camps generated conflict, which affected the political unity and direction of the PAC. The chapter covers the Ruvu camp in greater depth as this was the most modern and well developed of all PAC camps in exile. This was a pilot project of the PAC receiving large amounts of international donor funding. It is in reference to the internal situation in this camp that this chapter examines issues of culture and what appeared to be tribalist tendencies among camp residents. The chapter engages the concept of tribalism, and explains how elements of this were manifested in the dynamics of relations among camp residents. The focus is on tribalist sentiments which were based on the areas of origin of PAC members in South Africa, created splits and promoted conflict within the PAC.

¹¹ Interview with Mfanasekhaya Pearce Gqobose, New Brighton, Port Elizabeth, 28 July 1996; the point is also made by T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*. Longman Press, London 1983, p.309.

In some instances the chapter draws comparisons with the situation in ANC camps in Angola and Tanzania, where similar problems occurred, showing how the leadership of the ANC dealt with such problems whilst managing to preserve a semblance of unity within the organisation.

Chapter 8 examines the evolution of PAC military strategy. It considers the development from *Pogo* to APLA. It maps the development of APLA in 1968 from the vestiges of *Pogo*, which was the military wing of the PAC during the period 1961 to 1967. Drawing on secondary literature, primary sources, as well as a few oral interviews, the chapter goes beyond tracking the evolution of strategy and interprets the PAC's understanding of the nature of war, specifically the liberation struggle in South Africa, as this had important implications for the running of the organisation, its structures and organisational ethic of "right" or "wrong". The issues examined in this chapter cut across the various periods outlined in the sections of Chapter 4.

Some of the questions examined deal with the way in which the PAC defined the "enemy" and whether this definition translated into distinctive military strategy.

The origins of the PAC's military strategy are traced from the anti-pass demonstrations culminating in the 21 March 1960 "positive action" campaign. This is followed by an analysis of the continuity and discontinuity in the strategies of APLA, between the periods 1968 to 1979 and 1980 to 1990. A few comparisons are considered with the development of military strategic thinking in the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), initially led by Herbert Chitepo and later Robert Mugabe. The chapter concludes that the military strategy of the PAC was formalised in 1967, revised in 1976, but hardly converted into organisational policy. The understanding of strategy among certain PAC members continued to reflect the conservatism of the *Pogo* era, with the enemy largely defined in terms of race rather than in terms of a combination of elements of race and a functional relationship with the Apartheid state.

The formal expressions of strategy as codified in PAC military documents did not transform into concrete policies informing the method of waging war. A distinction in the understanding of the "war" strategy between the political elite and the general cadreship in the army existed. This view is confirmed by divisions between the leaders and became a fundamental cause of strained intra-PAC relations during the exile period.

Chapter 9 examines the unbanning of the PAC and the way it responded to news of the unbanning. It examines the PAC's position on a negotiated settlement. It exposes the vacillations in the PAC's position to a point where the PAC joined, even though belatedly, the negotiations process. The chapter explores internal debates and discussions in the PAC on the question of negotiations, transitional arrangements to the new democratic

order, the PAC's vision of a new democratic order as well as factors that contributed to the PAC's dismal performance in the 1994 elections.

In the conclusion, thematic issues emerging from the political history of the PAC are defined and make the vast detailed information captured and analysed in this book intelligible. The first theme relates to a lack of strong managerial and leadership capacity in the PAC throughout the various phases of its existence in exile. Capable persons, skilled and highly educated, were sometimes overlooked due to revolutionary posturing of competitors. Even Nyathi Pokela, whose leadership abilities were highly regarded in the PAC, could hardly establish continuity of respected leadership. The problem of leadership unity and internal factionalism meant that the PAC could not strategize and formulate a popular vision of a new South Africa without Apartheid, comparable to its counterpart, the ANC.

The second theme covers significance of "praxis" as a tradition within a liberation movement. Praxis is about transition from theory to reality whilst leaving their intimate unity intact.¹² The attitude towards praxis entails a consciousness of practical fact; theory is not regarded as an end in itself. This is one of the areas where the PAC experienced problems. The organisation, despite advice from its strategists and academics, struggled to strategically position itself in the changing dynamics of the liberation struggle in South Africa, post 1989. These dynamics challenged the ideological outlook that had been framed by social and historical conditions of the liberation struggle in the early 1960s. v

¹² A Sanchez: Philosophy of Praxis. Merlin Press, London, 1977, pp. 169–179.

1 Sources in the Study of the History of the PAC

This chapter outlines the sources of information, procedures/methods used to collect and analyse data, as well as the assumptions underlying these. In the interests of intellectual honesty the range of sources used during the research is disclosed as far as possible. As Archie Mafeje argues, “irrespective of our sense of self-importance or destiny, we are but a passing phase. In the event, when it comes to pass or the tables are turned, may we not be condemned for tendentious history-writing?”¹ Hence the analysis of internal and external weaknesses in the sources has foundational importance in the analysis provided in this book. The focus on questions of sources and methodology reflects concern about historical objectivity as an important quality of historical scholarship. The objectivity of historical research lies in the methods of inquiry that yield knowledge that is reliable in the sense that people of similar training can recognise its worth and use it in their own studies.² In other words, the research should follow methodology that maximises the attainment of valid findings.³ This section outlines the various methodologies used and proceeds to an analysis of sources of information during the course of the research. It covers the research ethics observed when conducting the research and the manner in which these imposed certain limitations on the research.

The nature of primary sources used during the research is both varied and narrow in scope. Apart from the complex matrix of perspectives the documentary sources disclose, the greatest problem is the unequal spread of documentary sources over the various periods. This being the case, one is able to discern emerging trends and develop a coherent understanding of the history of the PAC.

Research methodology

The research methods used incorporate a combination of approaches, including both empirical and non-empirical research methods. In “traditional” research terms, the former includes qualitative, quantitative and participatory action research. Non-empirical re-

¹ A. Mafeje: *In Search of an Alternative: A Collection of Essays on Revolutionary Theory and Politics*, SAPES Books, Harare, 1992, p. 62.

² R.B. Smith and P.K. Manning (eds): *Qualitative Methods, Vol.2: Handbook of Social Sciences Method*. Ballinger Publishing Company, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1982, p.168.

³ J. Mouton and D. Joubert (eds): *Knowledge and Method in the Human Sciences*. Centre for Research Methodology, Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria, 1990, p. 50.

search involves philosophical analysis, conceptual analysis, theory building, and literature reviews. Empirical research typically utilises primary data, e.g. surveys, casestudies, evaluation research, and ethnographic studies, or existing data, whereas non-empirical methods would rely on discourse analysis, content analysis, textual criticism, historical studies and secondary data analysis. One needs to emphasise that because of the nature of the particular issues considered in this book, a combination of methods was used, for example, primary data, unstructured and structured interviews, a literature review as well as conceptual analysis. The aim is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the PAC's exile history and contribute towards the development of a theory of exile experience of liberation movements in Southern Africa. No quantification of the sample population was undertaken due to the difficulty in establishing the total numbers of PAC members who were in exile during this period.

One method used in the research to enhance the validity of data sources (such as PAC official documents), is "data triangulation" that is different types of data (oral and written) were used in the study to improve data validity.⁴ The cross-method triangulation was used to balance the strengths and weaknesses of sources uses. The PAC in exile, as a field of study has different aspects and dimensions, which are sufficiently wide-ranging as to require an equally wide-ranging selection of methods of data collection and analysis. On the whole, the methodology used was predominantly qualitative, focusing on narrative descriptions, analysis and interpretation of events from which was derived a coherent and synthetic elaboration of the experiences of the PAC in exile.

Research ethics

A number of ethical questions arose during the course of research and most especially so when conducting interviews. These included instances where some of the interviewees requested not to be named or their place of residence not revealed in either the interview or transcript of the interview. There were cases where the interviewees insisted that the interview should not be tape-recorded and the researcher only take notes. Some interviewees refused the researcher permission to take notes during the interview. These were ethical problems which had to be dealt with. They are ethical in the sense that the interviewee's constitutional rights had to be respected during the course of conducting the research. Besides that the interviewee's opinions and objections could not be ignored. This was also

⁴ Willem Schurink: "A few broad guidelines for the finalization of the project proposal to be submitted to USAID" Unpublished Seminar paper, National Prosecuting Authority Research Workshop, Pretoria, 2002, pp. 1–17.

complicated by the fact that the researcher relied on the goodwill of the interviewees, and that being the case, the researcher could only use persuasion, diplomacy and networks established with other interviewees to deal with some of these problems. The researcher had to display respect and sensitivity to the concerns of informants, given that the theme of research was of current relevance and could affect the fortunes and personal security of interviewees, especially those currently involved in party politics inside South Africa. Some of these difficulties were overcome, especially where anonymity had been requested, by devising codes to precede each narrative item, that is where anonymity was requested, references to person or places have been deleted and the researcher refers to “APLA Notes” and cites the dates and year of the interviews.

The state of sources

There are three main sources of historical knowledge during the exile period: written documents, oral information and electronic or visual sources. The shadows or obscurities that emerge from these sources, especially from the written sources, presented a formidable challenge. Patched-up records, missing dates, sequences which seemed absurd because preceding information had been destroyed, documents that were sketched in a vague and impressionistic manner – all these added up to a fractured and incomplete picture of events during the exile period.

The research towards the writing of this book used documentary sources, oral sources in the form of taped or recorded interviews and summaries of interviews and informal conversations. Electronic or visual information was consulted but proved to be of limited value to the key issues that the research sought to cover. The discussion will therefore focus on the two categories of sources and will highlight their strengths and weaknesses and the steps taken to overcome these. In this chapter the sources are not placed in any rigid or pre-ordained order of importance.

Primary documentary sources

Primary sources are both scarce and unevenly spread over historical periods. The earlier periods of exile i.e. 1960–1962 and 1963–1967 lack the clarity and elaborate illustration that came from written sources during the later periods. The evidence is often one-sided or fraught with ambiguities which make interpretation difficult. This can be attributed to both internal and external factors. The PAC had not developed an elaborate system of recording and preserving records for organisational purposes during these periods. Its systems and processes were in their infancy and the organisation operated clandestinely

under extremely precarious conditions. Decisions were made on an ad-hoc basis. Internal record keeping systems were only established in Tanzania from 1968 onwards. The 1963 police raid on PAC offices in Maseru contributed to the loss of formative PAC material in exile, as did another incident in August 1982 involving the burglary of PAC offices in the north-west of London by a Swede claiming to be a journalist, but who was actually a spy working for the South African security services⁵. The PAC lost materials including correspondence with other PAC offices around the world. From the period 1975 to 1990, there is a general trend towards the increasing abundance of PAC internal documents and a more structured system of keeping records. Some of these improvements occurred during the periods 1981 to 1985, the time of Nyathi Pokela's leadership and again during 1986 to 1990, the period of Johnson Mlambo's leadership of the PAC.

The largest portion of primary documentary materials used in this book was collected from the National Arts and Heritage Cultural Centre (NAHECS) archive, formerly called the Centre for Cultural Studies at the University of Fort Hare in the Eastern Cape. The archive houses all the documents accumulated during the exile period by two former liberation movements, the Pan Africanist Congress and the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCMA). The entire African National Congress (ANC) archive is housed separately at the Howard Pim Library, Fort Hare. Even before these archives were officially opened, "the University had begun to receive scholars who combed the documents in an effort to reconstruct the history of exiled liberation movements".⁶ This attests to the value of the documents housed in these archives for the light they shed on a history hitherto concealed and unknown.

The Monica Wilson Manuscript Collection at the University of Cape Town and the Gail Gerhart Collection at the University of the Witwatersrand were consulted. The material from these centres tends to focus more intensively on the events of the 1960 "pass" uprisings and the Sharpeville massacre as well as the sporadic events associated with the incidence of *Pogo*. These sources are about issues covered almost exhaustively in the research Tom Lodge has done on the "*Pogo* Insurrection".⁷ The data collected from NAHEC is particularly relevant to the subject of this book and therefore dominates, in quantity, the material collected from other centres.

Other sources of information include the Karis and Carter Collection at the UCT library and the PAC Collection at the Robben Island-UWC Mayibuye archives at the

⁵ The Guardian, April 7, 1983; Times, 7/4/83; Daily Telegraph, 8/4/83.

⁶ B.B. Maaba: "The archives of the Pan Africanist Congress and the Black Consciousness-oriented Movements". Unpublished Seminar Paper, History Seminar, University of Fort Hare, 1997, p.1.

⁷ T. Lodge: "The *Pogo* insurrection, 1961-1968". University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1984.

University of the Western Cape. In some instances the records in these institutions are duplicated (especially the material on the 1960 anti-pass campaigns and *Pogo* uprisings), which are also available at the PAC archives in Fort Hare. The information in these centres, though peripheral to the key areas of focus addressed in this book, was informative and has enriched the discussion. Manuscripts from international agencies, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, Amnesty International and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees were collected from the TRC Research Department. Sources derived from organisations such as the World Council of Churches proved useful since they provided an outsider perspective on the PAC. The research, as it was undertaken from 1998 to 2002, remained open to additional sources, which could be identified up to the point of writing and submission of the manuscript to the publishers. Such additional sources include the Basler Afrika Bibliographien: Namibia Resource Centre and Southern Africa Library in Basel, Switzerland. This is where I found the archives of the solidarity group *Kämpfendes Afrika*, which was based in Zurich and has PAC material covering the years 1971 to 1988. Pictures of PAC leaders like John Nyathi Pokela, Johnson Mlambo and David Sibeko were found in this archive. The material from this archive helped to confirm issues raised in internal documentation of the PAC at the archives of the University of Fort Hare.

In summary, the archives of the NAHECS at the University of Fort Hare have been prioritised because all PAC documents from the various offices of the organisation in countries of Europe, Asia, Africa, America and United Kingdom are kept there. The material captures the internal dynamics of the organisation, whereas the material from the ANC and BCM archives, as well as the manuscripts from international organisations, serve to provide an outsider perspective on the PAC.

The documentary material at the PAC archives at the University of Fort Hare can be classified into the following categories:

- Memoirs, diaries, official and private letters, biographies;
- Press statements, speeches, reports, minutes of meetings;
- Financial statements and records;
- Party publications (i.e. newsletters, journals, poetry) draft procedure documents and training manuals.

Each category of these documents when considered together, and compared and corroborated by oral evidence provides a picture of events, which approximates a reliable reflection of the state of affairs in the PAC during this period. The serious obstacle with documentary sources relating to the conflict in the PAC is the question whether the officials recording these were in a position to reflect objectively about issues which affected

them, that is were the “chroniclers in a position to give a faithful account?”⁸ Which clues about the assumptions, prejudices and convictions of the chroniclers are indirectly disclosed by the documents? Therefore the approach used during the research involved constant corroboration of facts, but most important was the mastering the historical context in which the documents were constructed and understanding the roles or contributions of the various historical actors.

PAC archival materials assume three other forms that cut across the categories indicated above. Firstly, there are those documents the PAC officially intended for publicity which were deliberately made available to the public or to the PAC constituency inside and outside South Africa, to governments of various countries, statutory bodies and organs of civil society, through their Publicity and Information Department. Secondly, there were those documents, which were strictly for internal use. However, some of these were leaked to the public and to governments of other countries. Lastly, there are those documents written about the PAC by former members (dissident groups/organisations), rival organisations or by the press and those by international organisations. There is a miscellaneous category of documents difficult to classify, such as personal letters written by relatives of PAC members, raising issues of politics and family.

The first category of documents, i.e. PAC documents intended for publicity, tend to be carefully formulated and convey clearly organisational approaches and goals. On the negative side, contradictions that clearly existed between formal procedures and organisational practices are not addressed. These are quite obviously organisational support documents and are couched in esoteric ideological terms indicating a sense of patriotic commitment to the liberation struggle. The documents consciously sell the “revolutionary” agenda of the PAC to supporters, would-be supporters and the international community at large. A good example of this is illustrated by the following publications:

- *Azania Combat* and *Azania Commando*— These journals highlight the military adventures and thinking of the PAC army, i.e. the Azanian People’s Liberation Army (APLA). *The Azania Combat*, upon examination of its content, goes as far back as 1970, whereas the *Azania Commando* seems to be the latest publication, but is, however, undated.
- *Azania News* – This is a PAC newsletter, which focused more broadly on the state of the nation, i.e. South Africa, and outlined the role of the PAC as a “leading” force of change among other role-players. It captured “positive”, events in Tanzania in which the PAC participated, e.g. cultural events hosted by the

⁸ J. Tosh: *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History*. Longman, London, 1984, pp. 42–64.

Tanzanian government as well as the developments within the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). This publication dates as far back as 1966 and is one of the oldest publications the PAC produced in exile. Another newsletter, which developed along similar lines as *Azania News*, was called *Izwe Lethu* (meaning “Our Land”). It was first published in 1965. It was used to cover retrospective analysis of achievements during the previous years and outlined activity plans for the following year. It presented profiles of the PAC branches inside South Africa and provided a sense of PAC activity inside the country.

- *The Africanist* – This journal provided a forum of ideological debates within the PAC but was often used to rehash in parrot-like fashion, the speeches and writings of Mangaliso Robert Sobukhwe, the founding President of the PAC. It is the oldest publication of the PAC. It started in 1958 and continued until the organisation was unbanned in 1992.

Alongside these publications were a number of other newsletters and journals, some targeted women, e.g. *Azania Women*, a journal which was first published in 1985. Other newsletters were mouthpieces for the PAC youth and students, e.g. *Azania Youth*, *The Young Africanist*, *The Voice of the African Student* (aimed at youth) and *The Good Shepherd*, (aimed at the students and focused more on issues of education). *The PAC News and Views* was produced by the Maseru-based PAC Information Bureau and even though undated, seems to have been produced in the late 1970s or early 1980s, according to the issues addressed. Some of these documents have not been published as they were only for circulation amongst members and supporters inside and outside South Africa.

The above listed three categories of publications, which were the main publications produced at the PAC headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. Other publications were produced by PAC offices in other countries, e.g. *The PAC News* was produced largely by the PAC offices in Australasia and the Pacific; *Lehadima*, a newsletter first circulated in 1989, was produced by the PAC offices in North America; *Azania To-Day* was produced by the PAC Observer Mission to the United Nations in New York, in the United States and was first published in 1980. PAC poetry is contained in a publication entitled *Azania Red with Anger*, a series of poems which PAC members and supporters wrote and published in an attempt to inspire and mobilise support for the organisation.

Common themes run through all these publications. These include a continuous reference to the speeches of Mangaliso Sobukhwe and the PAC’s interpretation of these to shed light on the political climate of various periods; listing of PAC “heroes and heroines”, conditions and new developments inside South Africa; ideological positions of the

PAC on issues such as the role of labour, women, the question of socialism and the land issue.

Reading these publications gave the impression that all was well in the exiled PAC. The documents give the impression that the ascendancy of Black Consciousness inside South Africa was another PAC strategic initiative, although interviews with members of the BCM indicate that it was not the case.⁹

Besides the documents intended for publicity, there are those meant for internal use by members of the organisation. A thorough analysis of these documents adjusts the picture or the image developed by the publications of the PAC. Included in this category are the following documents:

- *The minutes of meetings of the Central Committee of the PAC.* These proved to be an important source of information during the research. The minutes outline all the debates and discussions, which took place among the leadership. The problems of lack of discipline in the camps, the performance of various departments, the reshuffles made in the Central Committee during the various leadership periods and the management of funds, are all outlined in the Minutes of the Central Committee meetings.
- *Memoranda* from the various heads of departments are a very important source of information. These include Memoranda from the office of the Chairman of the organisation as well as letters to donor organisations, fraternal bodies, the United Nations, OAU and Frontline States (FLS). This correspondence covers a wide range of issues including requests for funds, the introduction of PAC representatives, the PAC position on debatable political issues such as the Iraq-Iran war, sanctions against South Africa as well as PAC attempts to revive diplomatic ties, and announcements of PAC programmes to the various heads of states in Southern Africa. Included is the correspondence with allies such as ZANU and Communist China. One of the most controversial, yet revealing memorandum is that by Henry Isaacs, PAC's Director of Foreign Affairs and Head of the PAC Observer Mission to the United Nations (UN): "Re-guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs". Another article circulated internally was "South Africa's Pan Africanist Congress. Chronic Instability and Revolutionary ineffectiveness". These documents were both written in 1982 around the time of the author's resignation in March of the same year. The Memorandum "Re-guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs" spells out a number of internal problems in the

⁹ Interview with Comrade Tokoane, former member of the BCMA Central Committee in exile, Pretoria, 3 February, 2002.

PAC, including “factionalism and cliquism”, “the position of the PAC in Zimbabwe”, “disunity and the failure of the central committee to address critical issues of the struggle”, “gossip and rumour-mongering” and concludes with a series of proposals to the PAC Central Committee¹⁰. Whereas, the article “South Africa’s Pan Africanist Congress”, examines three major areas, i.e. the PAC’s debilitating internal problems, the organisation’s “revolutionary ineffectiveness” and the organisation’s “diplomatic isolation”,¹¹ the criticisms made by Isaacs against the PAC were well laid out in the manuscript of a book intended for publication, “Struggle within a Struggle: an inside view of the PAC of South Africa”.

- The press statement dated 25 August 1982 released by the PAC office in Tripoli, Libya, elaborated on the issues of “Conspirators within our Party”.¹² This highlighted the tensions inside the party.
- Two other “confidential” letters from Henry Isaacs, to the PAC Central Committee refer to, “The Internal Situation in Azania and the Need for a Positive Response from the PAC”, dated August 6 1980. The other, dated January 25 1982 makes reference to the issues of “protocol” which were not being followed within the party and finally, the
- Problems of “misinformation” about the performance of some PAC officials, including the author.¹³
- One document is a mimeograph by T.M. Ntantala entitled, “TM Ntantala is gone; but his ideals will conquer”. In spite of the fact that it eulogises the life and contribution of Ntantala in the liberation struggle, it emphasizes issues which are very important in this book. These include the 1979 split in the PAC, following the Arusha (in Tanzania) Consultative conference. The split resulted in the formation of a new organisation, chaired by Ntantala called the Azanian People’s Revolutionary Party (APRP). Most importantly, the document outlines the positive role played by international organisations such the United Nation’s High Commission for Refugees in assisting the expelled group as well as the role of the Tanzanian, Zimbabwean (ZANU (PF)) and Ugandan governments and

¹⁰ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: H. Isaacs- Memorandum; to all representatives, offices and branches of the PAC – Re: Guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs, pp. 1–39.

¹¹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: H. Isaacs - ‘South Africa’s Pan Africanist Congress in the 80’s: Chronic Instability and Revolutionary Ineffectiveness, no date, p. 3.

¹² PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, Press Statement, 25 August 1982, p. 2.

¹³ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: H. Isaacs-Memo-New York to Dar-es-Salaam: The Internal Situation in Azania and the need for positive response from the PAC, Dar-es-Salaam, 6th August, 1980, pp. 1–4.

the OAU Liberation Committee, in healing the split.

- The Reports of the two consultative congresses held in Tanzania at Moshi 19 to 22 September 1967 and Arusha 27 June to 2 July 1978 convey the tensions, cliquism, and feuds which were largely a result of poor financial mismanagement, leadership ineptitude and ideological differences.
- The Memorandum from the PAC Mission to the United Kingdom and Continental Europe dated 9 February 1982, is a harsh response to what was alleged to be the “misleading, erroneous and pornographic circular dated 16 January 1982”¹⁴. It reveals the factionalism and nature of the power struggles affecting the exiled PAC.
- TM Ntantala’s faction issued a document, “Crisis in the PAC” shortly before the 1979 split, in which he outlined the areas of difference he had with Leballo, then the acting President of the PAC in exile. These included “collective decisions and co-coordinated action”, “handling internal relations”, “party building” “army building and waging the armed struggle” and “the handling of external relations”.¹⁵

These documents are not an exhaustive list of all the material consulted, a list of which can be found in the bibliography. As indicated above, other documents written about the PAC by other organisations, splinter groups from the PAC, as well as political competitors such as the ANC were consulted. These are useful in so far as they bring a new perspective about the PAC during this period.

One example is the statement by the “African National Congress of South Africa on the question of unity with the PAC at the 31st meeting of the Organisation of African Unity, Dar-es-Salaam in June 1978”.¹⁶ This is one of the most comprehensive documents the ANC produced on its position with respect to the existence of the PAC, unity with the PAC, the position of the PAC in exile and the role of the PAC in the liberation struggle. It analyses the “breakaway background” from the ANC, the “formation of the PAC” the “CIA creation”, the “myth of PAC militancy”, the “Pass campaign of 1960”, PAC-ANC “united front abroad” and the “P.K. Leballo and Hans Lombard” connection.¹⁷ Hans Lombard was a South African spy who was alleged to have tricked the PAC chair-

¹⁴ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Mission to the UK and Continental Europe, Dar-es-Salaam, 9 February 1982, pp. 1–3.

¹⁵ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: T.M. Ntantala: The Crisis in the PAC, Dar-es-Salaam, 1977, pp. 1–27.

¹⁶ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Statement of the ANC of South Africa on the question of unity with the Pan Africanist Congress, 31st Meeting of the Organisation of African Unity, Lusaka, June 1978.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 1–26.

man, P.K. Leballo into a fraternal relationship enabling Lombard to accumulate a mass of information on the PAC.¹⁸

In general, the documents on the PAC found in the ANC archives tend to be extremely critical of that organisation and need to be subjected to a vigorous process of interrogation. The two organisations competed for funds and sole status as legitimate representatives of the people of South Africa in the eyes of the international community. The document “The Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa; Whom does it serve?”¹⁹ describes the PAC as a spy organisation which had absolutely no commitment to the liberation struggle of the people of South Africa. This was part of the ANC propaganda against the PAC, regarded by the ANC as a competitor splitting international opinion and support for the anti-apartheid struggle.

One of the largest collections in the PAC archives is from Tanzania.²⁰ It contains documents that include correspondence between PAC headquarters and other PAC offices all over the world as well as with donor organisations such as the United Nations and the International Labour Organisation.

Speeches and addresses delivered in different places are available in this collection. Some of these are undated and in some instances it is not clear who the speaker or the addressee was. This might have resulted either from the mistakes of those who were typing the speeches, or from a desire for secrecy.²¹

Other documents found in the Tanzania mission collection at the National Arts and Heritage Cultural Centre cover the PAC settlement in Morogoro (Mosogoro), near Bagamoyo. Included in these files are pictures of PAC cadres in different workshops of the complex. Such pictorial sources shed light on the lifestyle and whereabouts of the individuals and events covered.²² They provide insight into the social life of PAC members and indicate how limited material resources contributed to the generation of conflict within the PAC.

Of the PAC missions outside Africa, the London and United Nations (US) missions have provided a substantial number of records. The documentation from the London mission (referred to in the correspondence as the UK and Continental Europe mission) focuses largely on various issues of engagement between the PAC and organisations such

¹⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 1–26.

¹⁹ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: *The Pan Africanist Congress: Whom does it serve?*, Lusaka, n.d.

²⁰ B.B. Maaba: The archives of the Pan Africanist Congress and the Black Consciousness-oriented Movements, p. 5.

²¹ B.B. Maaba: The archives of the Pan Africanist Congress and the Black Consciousness-oriented Movements, p. 5.

²² *Ibid.* pp. 5–6.

as the Commonwealth of Nations, the Catholic Institute for International Relations and the World Council of Churches. Other interesting records are of correspondence between the PAC and the BCMA between 1979 and 1983, when the latter was still new in the exile environment. The documentation from this mission includes some office diaries which were of limited value due to the numerous gaps in recording. Newspaper clippings and newspapers in the collection from this mission were not always relevant to the issues covered in this book as they focus mostly on “anti-Apartheid activities in London as well as topical issues in South Africa”.²³

The collection from the United Nations Mission contains the correspondence between the PAC and the UN on matters such as finance, the needs of PAC cadres in the camps and issues around the education of PAC members. Included in this collection are the biographies of PAC leaders, photographs of PAC members in UN sessions, addresses by PAC members to the UN and newspaper articles covering PAC issues.

Oral sources

The use of oral sources as primary research sources is a contested terrain. Tensions exist between the Rankean paradigm, which revealed “the cult of facts and documents” in the study of history on the one hand, and the rise of African history on the other, which brought forth the “fetishism of oral history” and traditions²⁴. This tension characterises the dialectic of orality and textuality in the production of historical knowledge. These are issues of a theoretical nature still relevant to academic historians in the present. Whether these will ever finally be resolved, is debatable.

Despite these theoretical questions, this research reconstructs some aspects of the exile experience of the PAC through the use of oral interviews. This is premised on the understanding that oral sources “have a part to play in the reconstruction of the past. The importance of this part varies according to place and time. It is a part similar to that played by written sources because both are messages from the past to the present, and messages are key elements to historical reconstruction”.²⁵ Raphael Samuels argues that oral evidence should make the historian hungry for documents, “not less and when he finds them he can use them in a more ample and varied fashion than his sedentary colleagues”.²⁶ In the light of these views, this research cautiously uses oral information, knowing full well

²³ A. Temu and B. Swai: Historians and the Africanist History: A critique. Zed Publishers, London, 1981, pp. 113–115.

²⁴ J. Vansina: Oral Tradition As History. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1965, p. 199.

²⁵ *Ibid.* p. 199.

²⁶ B. Nasson: The oral historian in Studies in History of Cape Town, Vol. 6, 1988, pp. 13–24.

that in the absence of other independent sources to corroborate it, oral sources may well represent a lower order of reliability.²⁷

Oral information consulted in the process of this research includes a collection of oral documentation in the form of about 413 reel to reel tapes on different issues pertaining to the PAC, from the archives of the NAHECS at Fort Hare. In some cases the tapes do not have dates, which makes it difficult to ascertain when the information was recorded. These interviews are in the form of speeches delivered by PAC leaders and interviews with the leaders of the PAC about their life histories and their roles in the PAC. They focus more on general issues pertaining to the organisation. One tape, which is particularly relevant to this study, is a record of the PAC consultative conference in Arusha, Tanzania, June-July 1978. On this particular cassette, the tension within the PAC dominates the discussion. Issues raised include the lack of discipline in the PAC camps, PAC funds and problems of tribalism in the organisation.

Besides these sources, there is oral information collected by the author in the form of recorded interviews and transcripts. In some instances the book relies, especially to cover clandestine operations, more heavily on this information. It includes interviews with non-PAC members from other South African Liberation movements, as well as PAC members who lived in exile in Lesotho and Tanzania in particular, members of the PAC army and leaders of dissident groups, which broke away from the PAC, e.g. interviews with TM Ntantala (now deceased). Their responses tended to reflect their position and experiences during the conflict and at times were expressed in defensive tones, at other times were completely evasive. The informants from other political organisations tended to paint a picture of an organisation was persistently in conflict with itself, giving rise to the view that “in exile there were many PACs of South Africa not one”.²⁸

About twenty former PAC exiles were interviewed. Everyone approached agreed to be interviewed, although three informants withdrew prior to the interview, as they doubted the intended use of the information.

The interview techniques consisted of in-depth interviews, sometimes using a structured questionnaire. In certain instances the questionnaire was not strictly adhered to as the issues were so familiar to the researcher. An interview with one informant would generally continue over two to three days. Some interviews were tape-recorded, although this depended on the consent of the informant. In some instances only notes were taken during the process of the interview. Interviewees were, in all cases, willing to give information but the level of detail varied from one informant to the other. Most interviews

²⁷ J. Vansina: *Oral Tradition as History*, p. 199.

²⁸ Interview with W. Mazamisa, Gugulethu, Cape Town, 1 May 2000.

were conducted in both English and isiXhosa. In most cases interviewees were tactfully encouraged to speak in their mother tongue so that they could divulge information in a more comfortable and relaxed way. The choice of subjects was selective, the researcher starting with those subjects best known to him. From these subjects the researcher would obtain pointers to new sources.

Interviews varied in duration, some lasting for ninety minutes and others taking two hours. During the interviews, the researcher adopted an appreciative style appropriate to a conversation. The approach resembled the informal interviewing procedure designed to encourage meaning-making by narrative recounting rather than the more categorical responses sometimes contained in standard questionnaires.²⁹ On the whole the interview process produced what might be called an autobiographical narrative of the informants. Selections from some of the interviews are quoted in the book. One of the dangers with this is the possibility that one might miss the nuances and elaborate qualifications of a fuller narrative the interview might reveal. It is important therefore to understand the context of the thesis and the problems it seeks to address. Another problem with oral interviews was that of generational influences which affected the informant's understanding and interpretation of events in the PAC during the exile period.

The PAC former exiles interviewed fall into three groups: the group from the 1960s, commonly referred to as "Imigwenye" in the case of the ANC and "*Pogo*" in the case of the PAC, the group from the post-1976 Soweto uprisings and the group from the uprisings of 1984-1986. The age gaps between the informants from these groups and their willingness to divulge the details of events during the exile years varied, but they all shared a common suspicion about a study, which seeks "to undress the PAC", as one informant commented.³⁰

As with documentary sources, there are positive and negative attributes with oral information gathered. On a positive note, interviewees were keen to be interviewed about the exile history of their party and were honest about the fact that there were "moments of trouble inside the party. But these were only in 1967 and 1978 and were otherwise resolved by the organisation without outside help".³¹ This tendency to limit the problems to only two publicly known incidents was commonly found in interviews with PAC officials still loyal to the organisation. There was an openness about the power structures of the PAC and the limited resources and hardships of life in the camps.

²⁹ The same concepts are used by Andrew Rutherford in his research on Criminal Justice and the Pursuit of Decency. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1993, p. 8; and also by Jerome Bruner : Acts of Meaning. Harvard University Press, Massachusetts, 1990, p. 123.

³⁰ Interview with Comrade Zimbiri, Umtata, 18 November 1986.

³¹ Interview with Mfanasekhaya Gqobose, Port Elizabeth, 28 July 1996; APLA Notes, Langa Township, Cape Town, 1 May 2000.

On the negative side, some of the interviewees, especially those who are still loyal and active in the Party, tended to be extremely defensive and wanted to portray a glorified image of the PAC in exile. Some saw the interview session as an opportunity to argue the case for the PAC and also lecture the interviewer on Africanism.

Issues arising from the interview information and archival materials shape and inform the themes examined in the book. These include:

- The management of funds
- Styles of leadership
- Living conditions in the camps
- Attempts by the political leadership to win the hearts and minds of the soldiers in the army
- The “internal-enemy-danger” neurosis³²
- The “womanising and boozing” habits of some elements of the leadership of the organisation.³³

In the case of those informants who insisted on and emphasised the importance of anonymity for reasons of security given that “the ugly past still lives”³⁴ with them, the research makes reference to the initials of the person or to “APLA Notes” and indicates the dates and the region where the interview was conducted.

Electronic/Visual sources

This material includes video cassettes and correspondence on computer discs kept at the NAHECS archives in Fort Hare. A sample of this material shows that it is recent material focusing on issues affecting the PAC immediately before it was unbanned in 1990. The computer discs came mainly from the PAC – UN Observer mission in the US. The video-tapes recorded, among others events, the UN special session, which paid tribute to founding President of the PAC, Mangaliso Sobukhwe. One tape recorded an interview with the PAC president after Sobukhwe, namely Zeph Mothopeng, in 1989. Even though this material is interesting, not much of it was directly related to the internal conflict.

Summary

The book uses documentary sources and oral information as major sources of information to examine the history of the PAC. All the sources used have strengths and weaknesses of

³² APLA Notes, Western Cape, 6 September 2000.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ APLA Notes, Gauteng, 19-21 December 2002.

which the researcher is acutely aware. While it is possible to weave together a meaningful history of the PAC in exile using these sources, the level of depth, sequence of events and details of activities are sometimes difficult to establish. Some primary source documents are undated, anonymous, hand-written and certain issues are addressed in coded language. This made interpretation difficult. Therefore it became important to subject the contents to vigorous cross-corroboration against oral information in order to attain the highest level of verisimilitude. In some instances, informants could not directly speak to some of the questions for reasons of security, clearly stated by informants. Deductive logic and the linking of events to a broader context was necessary to more accurately portray the narrative. Reference to existing literature served as an important resource to close the gaps created by limited primary sources and to sharpen the interpretation. The following chapter provides an overview of the literature examined in writing of the book.

2 Historiographic Overview

This chapter surveys existing academic and popular literature on the exile political history of the PAC. Of particular interest is the literature on the formation of the PAC in exile and its internal relations. The period commences in 1960 and lasted until the PAC was unbanned in 1990. It highlights the way in which the exile history of the PAC is portrayed in existing literature; it identifies strengths and weaknesses in the literature and indicates how this provides a point of departure as well as a justification for future research on the PAC. The chapter does not examine the literature on this subject in any depth. It gives an overview of the existing literature and provides an introduction to emerging scholars working in this area, indicating general trends in the available literature on the PAC.

Research on the politics of exile liberation movements is generally lacking and this is particularly the case with the PAC. Available secondary literature on the PAC is scanty and narrow, especially on the exile period. Existing literature focuses more on the PAC's formative years inside South Africa and its role during the anti-pass campaigns in the early 1960s. John Marcum argues the main reason the entire spectrum of exile South African liberation movements remains under researched lies in the very nature or conditions of exile politics. He describes these as often "partisan and polemical" and identifies the "hostile responses" evoked by critical scholarship as serving to discourage research.¹ This continued unabated to the post-1994 period. The new challenges and research questions, which emerged with the new democratic period shifted the research focus from exile politics to more pragmatic questions of nation building. As a result many of the events and developments during the exile period remain unknown or only partially understood. This chapter is an attempt to contribute towards a better understanding of this period.

Existing academic work and popular literature on this subject posits certain historiographic trends worth analysing. Books published to date tend to be partial in their sympathies or deal with only a portion of the overall picture. Some bear the obvious marks of self-justification or propaganda. For purposes of analysis, existing literature on the subject has been grouped according to "schools of thought". Reference will therefore be made to contending schools of thought, for instance, the "old school", the "opposing school" and the "new school" of thought, in order to designate the different approaches to the PAC's exile political history. Literature on liberation movements from other countries in

¹ J.A. Marcum: *The Angolan Revolution*, MIT Press, Cambridge MA, 1978, p. 182.

Southern Africa are included in my analysis. The intention is to compare trends in writing about exile liberation movements. The literature from other countries covers FRELIMO (Mozambique), ZANU (Zimbabwe), and SWAPO (Namibia). It should be noted that the survey of literature from the experiences of other countries is not exhaustive and was limited to literature available to the author at the time of this research.

Two competing approaches or schools of thought on the political history of the PAC in exile can be identified in existing literature. One school of thought is much older and critical of the PAC's performance in exile. It is more explicit about the various kinds of problems and conflicts within the exiled PAC. The other approach tends to be more defensive and portrays a heroic image of the organisation. Criticisms levelled against the PAC are perceived in ideological terms as an unfair attack on the organisation, and so seen as a justification of uncritical defence.

The source of the schism is explained by Temba Sono in his book, *The dilemmas of African intellectuals in South Africa*. He points out that it has become fashionable among scholars to seek to acquire labels as intellectuals of particular ideological traditions.² In general terms, this could be the source of the differences of approach to the subject. The tendency to advance and defend "particular ideological traditions" is one of the major problems in the literature about the PAC. "This tendency dwarfs", according to Sono, the purpose of a scholarly mission, let alone intellectual analysis.³ Sono's perspective, in spite of its merits, misses the point about fundamental differences in the research methods employed to generate narratives about the PAC in exile. The point is that the quality of data and methods employed, will always take precedence above pre-conceived ideological commitments.⁴ The differences in approach could well be linked to ideological persuasions, but central to these differences are the methods of data collection and questions posed as a basis for the construction of a historical narrative. This is what has been found in the analysis of existing secondary literature about the PAC.

All the same, a "new school" of thought (approach), which seeks to transcend the characterisation indicated by Sono, has emerged after the unbanning of liberation movements in South Africa in 1990. This school is associated with the renewed availability of sources that were unavailable pre-1990. The "new school" is in its infancy and has not published much research. It is, however, strengthened by changes in perspective which have recently characterised the writings of scholars who, in the past, were identified with

² T. Sono: *The dilemmas of African Intellectuals in South Africa*. University of South Africa, Pretoria, 1994, pp. 38–39.

³ T. Sono: *The dilemmas of African Intellectuals in South Africa*, pp. 38–39.

⁴ D. Busakwe: *The dyadic personality in the new testament and Ubuntu in Africa: A comparative study*, Unpublished MA Thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1997, pp. 6–10.

the “old school”. The new approach seeks to create a balance of perspectives on the PAC’s exile political history. It elaborates, not only on the failures and problems of the organisation, but also on the perceived actions of courage and success often not reported in most publications. Of course, this line of approach has weaknesses as well. It tends to straddle lines of argument that are clearly opposed, which in many instances, closely approximates “sitting on the fence”. The new approach’s emphasis on objectivity, not only of method but also of content based on a balanced analysis of facts, is encouraging. The recent articles by Brown Maaba, Thami ka Plaatjie and Sello Mathabatha, published in *The New Road to Democracy in South Africa, volumes 1 & 2*,⁵ are important indicators of growth in the new approach. The PhD thesis and journal article published by the author,⁶ inform the contents of this book, and are among the early contributions of the new school in the historiography of the PAC.

Standard academic work on the PAC’s exile political history is represented in the published works of Tom Lodge. These are a standard academic work representing a long-standing academic view on the PAC in exile; as such they are identified as the core of the “old school”. His contribution to the subject can be divided into two phases, namely the first phase of publications written during the early 1980s and the second phase written in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The two phases mark the changes in approach or perspectival refinements separating Lodge’s earlier work from the later work. Publications during the first phase, can be identified with the “old school” of thought but those of the latter phase with the new approach. His book, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, is the only one of his early works which focuses on the PAC in exile. It provides an integrated conceptualisation of exile politics, and the life and history of both the African National Congress (ANC) and the PAC.⁷ In chapter twelve he focuses more specifically on the politics of the ANC and the PAC during the exile period, with special emphasis on the years 1960-1975. Lodge does not really treat the subject with the necessary detached scholarly attitude but nonetheless avoids quick, casual disparagement untroubled by the effort of serious proof, hence the exhaustive list of documentary sources cited as evidence for conclusions reached about the exile PAC. His sources on the PAC largely consist of

⁵ Thami ka Plaatjie: The PAC’s internal underground activities, 1960–1980 in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 2, Zebra Press, 2004, pp. 669–701; Thami ka Plaatjie: The PAC in exile, in *Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol.2, pp. 703–746; Brown Bavusile Maaba: The PAC’s war against the State, in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 1, 275–298.

⁶ K.Kondlo: “In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution” – Exile history of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azanian (South Africa), 1960–1990, D.Litt et Phil, University of Johannesburg, 2003; KKM Kondlo: “Leadership diversity and its impact on the PAC during the exile period”, *Journal for Contemporary History*, vol. 30, No. 1, June 2005.

⁷ T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*. Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1983.

perspectives other organisations had on the PAC. Furthermore, Lodge tends to rely heavily on newspaper accounts and police records. Very little internal PAC material is used in his work, let alone oral evidence. The undertones of position taking, in this instance, clearly against the PAC and fairly well disposed to the ANC, emerge from an interrogation of his analysis.

In the case of the ANC, about which a more favourable account is given, the sources consulted as a basis for the generalisations, tend to be wider and more diversified. Documentation on the ANC was easier to find due to the organisation's open propaganda and strategy. This section will now focus on Lodge's writings about the PAC.

Lodge's approach is characterised by the movement from the generality of background and context to the particularity of the actual events. He does this by outlining the sets of problems and difficulties South African liberation movements had to contend with in an exile environment. Even though he manages to capture some of the problems confronting both the ANC and the PAC during the exile period, his generalisations tend to remain as theoretical categories that are not well-integrated with detailed historical events. It is not clear how the historical experience of the PAC was determined by the "need to maintain sanctuaries in foreign states and sources of external assistance", by the need to re-establish internal activity and support and also by the need to hold the exile movement together.⁸ Even though the research towards this book adopts a similar approach, it is, however, sensitive to the way in which the vivid record of individual events move outwards through the radiating circles of explanation.⁹ However, generalisations are limited to the framework design at the beginning of each chapter.

Tom Lodge's latest publications appeared at a time when internal PAC documentation was available and are therefore less sketchy and more detailed than his earlier works. Among them are, *"Guerrilla Warfare and Exile Diplomacy: the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress"*,¹⁰ *"Soldiers of the storm: a profile of the Azanian People's Liberation Army"*¹¹ and *"The Long March; outline of the PAC, 1960–1990"*.¹² They cover a

⁸ T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa*, p. 295.

⁹ M. Newitt: *A History of Mozambique*, Hurst and Company, London, 1995, p. viii suggests this approach when dealing with exile liberation movements as subjects of historical enquiry.

¹⁰ T. Lodge: *Guerrilla Warfare and exile diplomacy: The African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress*, in T. Lodge and B. Nasson (eds.): *All, Here and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980's*, David Philip, Cape Town, 1991.

¹¹ T. Lodge: "Soldiers of the storm – A profile of the Azanian People's Liberation Army", in J Cilliers and M Reichardt (eds.): *About Turn: The Transformation of the South African Military and Intelligence*, Institute for Defence Policy, Midrand, 1993.

¹² T. Lodge: "The Pan Africanist Congress, 1959–1990" in Liebenberg, I, Lortan, F, Nel, B and van der Westhuizen, G (eds.) *The Long March: Outline of the PAC – 1960–1990*. HAUM, Pretoria, 1994.

broad historical period and require careful examination in order to outline the shifts that occurred in his examination of the PAC.

Two major pre-occupations seem to have informed Lodge's analysis and his style of presentation in the three later publications mentioned above i.e. maintaining scholarly objectivity and articulating it through a language less judgmental than in earlier publications. Added to this was the fact that after the unbanning of the PAC on February 2 1990, Lodge had much easier access to PAC records and activists. The political mood of the late 1980s and early 1990s may have had an influence on his political perspectives. This period was dominated by overwhelming sympathy for liberation movements. In some circles the PAC, which advocated radical solutions in favour of the Black majority, had significant support and its ideological stance was gaining understanding. To elaborate these points this section examines Lodge's later publications individually. It begins with an examination of the article, "*Guerrilla Warfare and exile diplomacy: the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress*".

The largest portion of the article is dominated by a discussion of the strategies of the ANC during the exile period. Very limited space is devoted to the PAC. A change of perspective in the way Lodge portrays the PAC in exile is remarkable. Issues which might have laid the foundations for some of the internal problems in the organisation (e.g. the short legal existence of the PAC inside South Africa) are identified and elaborated. He acknowledges the military activities of the PAC army, enumerates them and provides corroborating evidence to show that they were truly APLA attacks, instead of actions of the ANC's Umkhonto weSizwe. He briefly surveys the turbulent periods the organisation went through showing that some kind of stability was eventually achieved.

"*The Long March; outline of the PAC, 1960–1990*" is a compressed PAC history, beginning with the formation of the PAC in 1959 and ending with its unbanning in 1990. It focuses on the circumstances that forced the PAC into exile, i.e. the anti-pass campaign. Lodge details the events leading to the *Pogo* insurrection.¹³ The exile period is not covered adequately as greater attention is given to the PAC activities before it was banned and the *Pogo* insurrection of the early 1960s. The most in-depth and detailed article is, "*Soldiers of the storm: a profile of the Azanian people's liberation army*"¹⁴. It is interesting not only because it covers the least well known aspect of the PAC's history, its military struggle,

¹³ *Pogo* is an isiXhosa word meaning "pure" and was used by the PAC as a slogan during the uprisings which occurred during the period 1963–1968 inside South Africa. It is elaborated by Tom Lodge: in *The Pogo insurrection, 1961–1965*. University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1984.

¹⁴ T. Lodge: "Soldiers of the storm: a profile of the Azanian People's Liberation Army" in J Cilliers and M Reichardt (eds.): *About Turn: The Transformation of the South African Military and Intelligence*. Institute for Defence Policy, Midrand, 1993.

but because Lodge debates the ideological ramifications of the PAC's Pan Africanist ideology. He questions whether the ideological definition of the enemy was matched by action in the case of APLA attacks. Lodge traces the history of APLA operations and outlines the structure of its military command during the various phases of its development, i.e. from *Pogo* fighters to a modern guerrilla army, APLA. He fails, however, to identify and examine the transition from *Pogo* to APLA and the implications this had for the organisation. Nor does he examine the relationship between the army and the political leadership or show how this affected the programmes of the army during the exile period. Chapter 8 covers this issue.

There are obviously numerous other contributions to this subject of varying scope, insight and originality. Howard Barrell's article, "*The outlawed South African liberation movements*", exemplifies a publication coming from the "old school". Barrell's examination of the PAC in exile, even though sufficiently intriguing, remains superficial. It elaborates on the ideological sources of the organisation's failures and its inability to cope with the exile environment. He outlines the PAC's ideological inclination towards revolution in an iron-clad fashion; a factor which contributed to its limited international funding base. Like Lodge, Barrell lists all the categories of problems the PAC experienced in exile but in a less detailed fashion. He concludes that the PAC, therefore, was doomed to be "a tragic figure of modern exile politics".¹⁵ His article typifies good journalism, with its limitation of occasionally falling short on rigorous historical perspective. He published his article at a time when critical internal PAC documentation was not available. His line of analysis falls within the category of the "old school" because of its overt judgmental assumptions not based on a comprehensive and detailed examination of facts.

In contrast to the academic approach represented by Tom Lodge (in his early work) and Howard Barrell, are the writings of PAC adherents and sympathisers. These vary in quality, ranging from mediocre and ephemeral to exceptional originality, but do not shed the obvious ideological content. The M.Sc. dissertation, "*The Rise of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa*" submitted by Nana Mahomo to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the US, Philip Kgosana's book, *Lest we forget*, Benjamin Leeman's works such as "*Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania (South Africa): the origin and history of the Basutoland Congress Party of Lesotho and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania*" are representative of pro-PAC work or what could be called support literature.¹⁶

¹⁵ H. Barrell: The outlawed South African liberation movement, in S Jonson (ed.): South Africa: No turning back, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1989.

¹⁶ N. Mahomo: The rise of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa, Unpublished M.Sc.dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1965; P.A. Kgosana: Lest we forget; B. Leeman: Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania (SA), 1780–1984, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Bremen University,

Mahlangu's research paper, "*From South Africa to Azania: A critical analysis of the Pan Africanist Congress in exile (1962–1990)*", describes these works as "terribly inconsistent, and an annoyingly defensive history" of the PAC.¹⁷ The latest of this group of publications is Mxolisi Mgxashe's book, *Are You With Us? – The story of a PAC activist*¹⁸. Of course these publications should be understood for what they are - a representation or expression of a party perspective and an insider's view of the organisation's history.

Phillip Kgosana's book is more of a mimeograph, an autobiography, which seeks to explain the 1960 anti-pass campaign and focuses on the role played by the author in that campaign. What motivated Kgosana to write the book was "the need to put together an accurate account of the PAC campaign of 1960 in the Western Cape".¹⁹ He found that "too many write-ups have been done with all sorts of distortions, biases and half-truths" compelling him to "set the record straight".²⁰ He therefore writes with the passion characteristic of a loyal supporter of the PAC and is clearly not concerned with academic analysis. His book proceeds beyond the initially stated purpose and covers his life experiences in parts of Africa where there was PAC presence i.e. in Tanzania, Ghana, Ethiopia, Zaire and Uganda. His role as a PAC member in these countries is not clear in his account. He elaborates on his personal and family hardships and is silent on his political life. Besides that, he does not elaborate much on the domestic problems of the organisation and gives the impression that all was well inside the organisation, except for a few misunderstandings with Nana Mahomo, whom he joined in London in 1961 and Molotsi, who seemed to have been influenced by Mahomo against him. What comes out clearly in Kgosana's account is that conflicts in the PAC predated the Leballo period (1962), contrary to what Lodge conveys in his early publication. Unfortunately, Kgosana mentions these issues briefly. This is examined in detail in later sections of this book.

Moving along similar lines as Philip Kgosana is Nana Mahomo's thesis, "*The rise of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa*". Unlike Kgosana, Mahomo's study is more theoretical. It provides defensive explanations of the organisation's political origins and ideological position. In essence, Mahomo addresses theoretical questions related to the organisation's ideological standing. In particular, it provides clarity on issues such as the organisation's perceived ideological emphasis on racial identity as well as background his-

Germany, 1984.

¹⁷ D.A.B. Mahlangu: "From South Africa to Azania" A critical analysis of the Pan Africanist Congress in exile (1962–1990), Unpublished BA (Hons), Paper, University of Cape Town, 1991.

¹⁸ Mxolisi Mgxashe: *Are You With Us? The story of a PAC activist*, Mafube Publishers, Johannesburg, 2006.

¹⁹ PA Kgosana: *Lest we forget: an autobiography*. Skotaville, Johannesburg, 1988, p. 3.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.3

tory of the formation and rise of the Pan Africanist Congress, from the time of its formation to the exile years. The idea of providing a plausible explanation for the organisation's ideological standing is one of the issues covered in background chapters of this book.

A thesis written by Bernard Leeman, a member of the PAC in exile, exhibits similar tendencies. It begins by locating the development of the PAC and ANC in exile in Lesotho in particular, within the dynamic landscape of Basutoland politics. He relates the development of the PAC to the Basutoland Congress Party (BCP) and outlines the role of PK Leballo, a Basutoland national and PAC acting President, in the formation of the BCP. He examines the history of both the ANC and PAC before they were banned and then focuses largely on conflicts within the PAC. In some instances he dismisses Lodge's views on the central role played by PK Leballo in the conflict within the PAC in Lesotho and especially the press conference at which Leballo was blamed for disclosing *Pogo* plans.²¹ The thesis is very long and confused in terms of focus. It is not clear exactly what it seeks to establish. The author confuses dubious history and sweeping political statements. The complex relationships between the PAC, ANC and BCP are oversimplified, as the emphasis is more on leading personalities than on the organisations. The broad chronology posited in the study overlooks significant internal organisational developmental periods. The study fails its implicitly purported task of questioning the credentials of Lodge's analysis, fundamental findings and arguments.

PAC stalwart, Ellias Ntloedibe, published a book, in 1995, "*Here is a Tree; Political Biography of Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe*",²² is clearly a dedication and a song of praise, to Robert Sobukhwe, the founding President of the PAC. It proceeds to examine aspects of the life of the PAC in exile and describes the circumstances of the PAC in Lesotho, the setting up of a formal structure and the period of Pokela's leadership in Tanzania. It briefly discusses the events, which led to the removal of Leballo from leadership of the PAC. Lastly, the book covers the return of the PAC from exile and the leadership of Zeph Mothopeng. The book is a memoir of events in the PAC, based on personal experience, but does not provide in-depth analysis, a paradigm framework or an argument. The overall picture it depicts is that of a heroic liberation struggle led by the PAC before it was banned and went into exile. The only difficult moment it portrays is during the period immediately preceding the removal of Leballo from power. Besides that incident, the impression created is that the PAC was doing well.

²¹ B. Leeman: Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania (South Africa), 1780–1984 – the origins of the Basutoland Congress Party of Lesotho and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Bremen University, Germany, 1984. p. 180.

²² Elias, L Ntloedibe: *Here is a Tree; Political Biography of Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe*. Century-Turn Publishers, Botswana, 1995.

Another autobiographical account, which is fairly elaborate in its narrative and description of conditions of exile, is the recently published book by Letlapa Mphahlele, a former APLA commander, “*Child of this Soil; My Life as a Freedom Fighter*”.²³ The book is written in novel style and recounts in detail the exile experiences of the author. He joined the PAC post 1976 Soweto uprisings, living in various PAC camps, firstly in Botswana and later in Tanzania. Mphahlele’s life-story is informative as it covers details about living conditions in the camps and the nature of APLA operations, but the focus is more on how these affected the author and his personal contributions. The book does not provide a holistic and integrated picture of the exile experiences of the PAC. It only covers the events of the 1980s and no attempt is made to establish a connection with preceding phases. It does not provide any contextual background to the narrative of events and experiences of the author.

Mxolisi Mgxashe’s book, *Are You With Us?* is a biographical account of the life of a PAC activist who, through his experiences, seeks to shed light on the internal dynamics of the PAC’s internal underground as well as the state of the organisation in exile. The book explains the life history of Mgxashe, how he got drawn into PAC politics in Langa Township, Cape Town, events surrounding *Pogo* and most importantly, developments inside South Africa after the banning of the PAC. He explains how Africanists tried to regroup despite the leadership vacuum created by the arrest of leaders, and plan how the organisation should move forward. As he explains, “two watershed conferences in the PAC took place in 1961 – in Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape and in Maseru, Lesotho”.²⁴ The book lacks critical discussion and an objective review of the internal leadership conflicts and problems confronting the PAC.

Between the two opposing approaches in the political historiography of the PAC is an emerging “new school” whose overriding concern seems to be the balancing of perspectives about the exile history of the PAC. Existing works on the exile political history of the PAC attempt to do this, but close analysis reveals a strong emphasis either on the “negatives” or, defensively, on the “positives”. The approaches are related to ideological positions in favour of or against the Pan Africanist Congress. Even though it cannot be concluded that the emerging “new school” is neutral in this regard, it claims to show considerable effort in putting facts into perspective, and reveals a consciously guarded tendency to deliberately pursue failures and ignore successes.

A short research paper by Mahlangu and the latest publications by TG Karis and GM Gerhart, exemplify this approach. DBA Mahlangu’s research paper “*From South Africa to*

²³ L. Mphahlele: *Child of this Soil; My Life as a Freedom Fighter*. Kwela Books, Cape Town, 2002.

²⁴ M. Mgxashe: *Are You With Us?* p. 98.

Azania” is a critical analysis of the Pan Africanist Congress in exile, 1962–1990.²⁵ Key issues examined by Mahlangu include the theory of Africanism in general and its development and emergence in Africa and South Africa in particular. The study fails to effect a smooth transition from broad descriptions of Pan Africanism to the more specific South African variant of Pan Africanism. Debatable issues such as “Pan Africanism and Nationalism”, “orthodox nationalism versus its supposed counter-part”, revisionist nationalism, are raised but not examined exhaustively.²⁶ The study is more detailed on debates, which are peripheral to the stated concerns of his thesis. He examines the exile environment and summarises inputs of other scholars, but hardly offers new ideas. The last section of his study concentrates on the crisis periods the organisation went through in exile (i.e. in Chapter 3 – “The Rise and Decline”) and elaborates on the foundations already laid down by Tom Lodge, except for a few original inputs on the names of political actors, which are derived from oral interviews. He covers the military operations of the organisation’s armed wing (APLA), but some essential details on the organisation of these operations, the cadres involved, command structures and explanations of why the operations failed, are not provided. He does, however, provide interesting coverage of Leballo’s life history and carefully relates this to the successes and failures of the PAC, information not yet covered in other research works.²⁷ His emphasis on personality factors (e.g. “the Leballo factor”, “the Sobukhwe factor”) as major contributing factors in the strengthening and weakening of the organisation, raises a number of broad theoretical questions.²⁸ Mahlangu does not debate or problematise the extent to which historical events, including the successes or failures of a liberation organisation, can be explained in terms of the personality and role of an individual.

TG Karis and GM Gerhart’s book, *“From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1990”*, is part of a series of publications by the two writers, documenting the liberation struggle in South Africa. The particular publication referred to in this chapter attempts to elaborate and balance perspectives on the PAC’s exile history.²⁹ Most importantly, Karis and Gerhart’s series of publications, *“From Protest to Challenge”*, provide a collection of primary materials without which one could not write a credible history of the liberation struggle in South Africa. In summary,

²⁵ D.B.A. Mahlangu: “From South Africa to Azania” – A critical analysis of the Pan Africanist Congress in exile (1962–1990), Unpublished BA (Hons) Paper, UCT, 1991.

²⁶ Ibid. p. 41.

²⁷ D.A.B. Mahlangu: “From South Africa to Azania”, A critical analysis of the Pan Africanist Congress in exile (1962–1990), Unpublished BA (Hons) Paper, UCT, 1991. p.41.

²⁸ Ibid. p. 41.

²⁹ T.G. Karis and G.M. Gerhart: *From Protest to Challenge: a documentary history of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1990. Vol. 5. Nadir and Resurgence*, UNISA Press, 1997.

T.G. Karis and G.M. Gerhart focus, broadly, on the rise of African political movements, specifically on the formation of the ANC and the split which resulted in the formation of the PAC. They examine the state of the PAC in exile and the conflicts that dominated the organisation in the late 1970s. Their analysis of the conflict in the PAC is general, in the sense that it does not isolate and examine specific causes, but is limited to the examination of the roles of certain leading personalities such as PK Leballo, Vusumzi Make, David Sibeko and the heads of PAC missions in the various countries, who were not accountable to PAC headquarters for their activities. The publication does examine a variety of internal documentation which it supplements with oral interviews to depict the context of the conflict. The activities of the PAC military wing, APLA, are examined and the move towards internal stability in the PAC is critically appraised. The state of the organisation on the eve of political negotiations for a democratic society in South Africa is outlined, as it relates to the impact the conditions of exile had on the PAC. Karis and Gerhart, however, remain uncritical in their use of police records and newspaper reports when discussing the military activities of APLA. The number of failed military operations and police successes in apprehending APLA guerrillas is not corroborated against the organisational or civilian perspectives through oral information. All the same, their account remains the most comprehensive recent publication on the political history of the PAC before and during the exile period.

The two chapters by Thami ka Plaatjie in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, Vol. 2, provide fresh sets of details, but the chapters are theoretically dry as they list events and persons involved as if they are police investigation reports. Their strength lies in capturing the voices of participants, voices that are usually unheard if not completely marginalised in academic narratives. Plaatjie's first chapter examines "*The PAC's Internal Underground Activities, 1960–1980*". He traces the origins of leadership conflicts in the PAC to issues of leadership personalities and competition for positions of power. The most interesting issue raised in the chapter is how internal divisions in the PAC, between the elite (educated) leadership and its following versus the uneducated leadership and its following persisted even when PAC leaders were on Robben Island. To elaborate this, he takes the example of the conflict between Clarence Makwethu (former President of the PAC who led the first PAC election campaign in 1994) and Christopher Mlokoti, an educated PAC leader whose following was more among the Africanist elites in the Western Cape. The conflict between the two leaders was based on the character and identity of their support bases Makwethu attracted the less educated migrant workers in townships and Mlokoti the new urban elites who were fewer in number. Makwethu commanded the larger support. What Plaatjie demonstrates is how the support bases of leadership in the

PAC influenced and fuelled internal divisions. The entire chapter focuses on the details of constitution and operations of the PAC internal underground, especially after 1969, the year when “the critical mass of PAC members was released from Robben Island”³⁰. This issue is discussed in the book, but is not ranked alongside central issues, such as the “hidden” aspects of the PAC history during the period in exile. The major weakness of Plaatjie’s approach is over-reliance on stories from PAC activists and the limited use of primary documentary information. This compromises the methodological rigour and scholarly depth of his writings.

Plaatjie’s chapter on “*The PAC in Exile*” is a dress rehearsal of existing literature, limited as it is on the PAC in exile. Among the issues he covers in the chapter are the attempts to rebuild the PAC’s military wing and the leadership conflicts, while the rest of the chapter is dominated by an examination of the Azanian People’s Liberation Army’s (APLA) operation in Villa Peri. The latter is clearly driven by the quest to explain circumstances surrounding the death of Gerald Kondlo, the first commander of APLA, worshipped by the PAC as a hero. Again, Plaatjie’s analysis is based on interviews with PAC activists. As he also uses only secondary sources, his investigation lacks primary evidence. Whilst acknowledging the heroic efforts of the PAC during the exile period, Plaatjie balances the scales by pointing out “persistent leadership problems”³¹ in the exiled PAC.

Unlike Plaatjie’s approach, this book provides a context within which the PAC in exile should be understood. It does this by analysing the exile environment and the impact it had on the functioning of liberation movements and the leadership conflict in exile, to show how it affected the organisation and emphasizing specific issues which were critical to the generation of conflict.

Maaba’s chapter in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Vol. 1*, focuses on the PAC activities in Langa Township and Mbekweni Location in Paarl. He provides details lacking in Lodge’s account of the *Pogo* insurrection. He examines *Pogo* activities in the rural Transkei showing how the PAC following and influence grew during the early 1960s. Using archival information, oral interviews and secondary literature, Maaba provides a balanced scholarly analysis of events during this period. Most importantly, Maaba explains how the *Pogo* uprising “evoked memories of millenarianism in 19th century Xhosa resistance”³² in a manner that shows how the PAC appealed to memories of past struggles to make its cause credible and worthy of sacrifice.

³⁰ T. Plaatjie: The PAC internal underground activities, 1960–1980, in The Road to Democracy in South Africa, vol. 2, Zebra Press, 2004, p. 686.

³¹ T. Plaatjie: The PAC in Exile, in Road to Democracy in South Africa, vol. 2, p. 728.

³² B. Maaba: The PAC’s war against the State, 1960–1963, in The Road to Democracy in South Africa, vol. 1 p. 296.

Sello Mathabatha's chapter: "The PAC and *Pogo* in Pretoria, 1958–1964" in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 1, examines how the PAC established itself in Pretoria's African townships such as Atteridgeville, Lady Selborne and Mamelodi³³. He outlines the leadership roles of PAC stalwarts such as Jaffa Masemola, Samuel Moseneke (Judge Dikgang Moseneke's father), Stanely Mokgoba, Godly Mamabolo and others, in the establishment of the PAC in these areas. He examines the *Pogo* movement in Pretoria and shows how these were suppressed by the State. Mathabatha's chapter is a study of local dynamics in the black townships of Pretoria and shows how the PAC manipulated the dynamics to ensure its establishment alongside a longstanding presence of the ANC.

Stephen M. Davis's book, *Apartheid's Rebels - Inside South Africa's Hidden War*, examines the position of the exiled PAC and its relationship to the 1976 uprisings.³⁴ It analyses how banned liberation movements used opportunities presented by the uprising to strengthen their positions. Davis covers important issues, such as the underground activities of the PAC inside South Africa, not raised by other scholars. His study is limited in scope as it does not continue into the late 1980s and 1990s. He examines the role of the PAC underground during the Soweto uprisings and shows how the PAC was ideologically in a better position than the ANC to have taken advantage of the uprisings. He argues, "on the eve of the Soweto uprisings, however, the Congress was in a delicate position. Its ingrained policies of multiracialism, armed struggle, and accepting material assistance from non-African powers, in particular the Soviet Union and its allies, were in disfavour in the BCM dominated South Africa".³⁵ Besides this, Black Consciousness was ideologically closer to Pan Africanism. The "dormancy of the PAC underground", meant that the Soweto uprisings, and even its aftermath, could not really "fuel the rehabilitation" of the organisation.³⁶ Davis elaborates on the reasons for this and focuses mainly on factional fighting, unstable leadership and a lack of the necessary infrastructure. In contrast, Davis recognises the role played by the old PAC veteran, Zeph Mothopeng, to revive the PAC underground and shows how he was able to liaise successfully with the exiled leadership.

Even though Davis covers this interesting aspect of the exiled PAC politics, i.e. its internal underground network, he offers very little explanation in terms of the internal dynamics of the organisation in exile. His work attempts to place the exiled PAC in perspective and is associated with the new approach in the writing on PAC exile history.

³³ S. Mathabatha: The PAC and *Pogo* in Pretoria, 1958–1964, in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 1 p. 302.

³⁴ S.M. Davis: *Apartheid's Rebels: Inside South Africa's Hidden War*. A.D. Donker Publishers, Craighall, 1987.

³⁵ S.M. Davis: *Apartheid's Rebels: Inside South Africa's War*, p. 28.

³⁶ S.M. Davis: *Apartheid's Rebels: Inside South Africa's War*, p. 31.

Further interesting studies which inform this book include Benjamin Pogrund's biographical annotations of Mangaliso Sobukhwe, the founding president of the PAC, *Sobukwe and Apartheid*.³⁷ The book holds the view that the personality of Sobukhwe was critical to the internal unity of the PAC. His absence from the organisation during the exile years created a gap no one in the organisation could fill. Pogrund published a second book on Sobukhwe, *How Can Man Die Better – The Life of Robert Sobukwe*,³⁸ in which he examines his relationship with Sobukhwe and covers the last days of his life under house arrest in Kgalishiwe Township in Kimberly.

Joel Bolnick's article "*Sefela Sa Letsamayana – The Wartime Experiences of Potlako Kitchener Leballo*",³⁹ is informative because it details the life history and experiences of PK Leballo, the only figure in the exile PAC politics who, in many circles, is still vilified and hated; in others he is regarded as a hero and great courageous leader.

Similar historiographical trends in the political histories of exile liberation movements in other countries in Africa have been identified. A brief survey of the literature on the exile political history of Frelimo, SWAPO and ZANU informs this.

Joseph Hanlon's book, *Mozambique: The Revolution under Fire*,⁴⁰ and Allan and Barbara Isaacman's book, *Mozambique: From Colonialism to Revolution*,⁴¹ reads more like "support literature" produced about the history of liberation in Mozambique. They seek to demonstrate how Frelimo was able to translate Marxist theory into the practice of revolution. From Hanlon's perspective, Frelimo conducted guerrilla war in Mozambique along Marxist prescriptions. His analysis questions the radical objectives of Frelimo. He does not cover the internal relations in Frelimo, but gives the impression that the organisation was internally stable and free of power struggles.

Allen and Barbara Isaacman, in their book, *Mozambique: From Colonialism to Revolution*, are clear in their support of Frelimo. Their comprehensive coverage of the history of Mozambique, (starting from the pre-colonial and colonial periods to the time of the popular opposition struggle for liberation) as well as the post independence period, is selective. No attempt is made to define the internal problems of Frelimo as a liberation movement in exile between 1962 and 1975. The 1965 split, which led to the formation of COREMO, later called RENAMO, is not thoroughly examined. This leaves the impres-

³⁷ B. Pogrund: *Sobukwe and Apartheid*. Jonathan Ball, Johannesburg, 1990.

³⁸ B. Pogrund: *How Can Man Die Better – The Life of Robert Sobukwe*, Jonathan Ball, Johannesburg, 1997.

³⁹ J. Bolnick: '*Sefela Sa Letamayana – The wartime experiences of Potlako Kitchener Leballo*', University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1990, pp. 1–28.

⁴⁰ J. Hanlon: *The Revolution Under Fire*. Zed Books, London, 1984.

⁴¹ A. Isaacman and B. Isaacman: *Mozambique: From Colonialism to Revolution*. Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1983.

sion that the authors' intention was to write a heroic history of the party.

A new school of thought in the writing of Mozambican history emerged, an example of which is the work of Malyn Newitt. Her book, *A History of Mozambique*, traces the pre-colonial and colonial history as well as the struggle for liberation.⁴² She provides a perspective from outside the party circles and analyses the internal dynamics of Frelimo as a liberation movement in exile. She examines constituent elements of internal conflict such as "power struggles", "ideological and ethnic tensions" as well as differences caused by military failure.⁴³

Barry Munslow's book, *Mozambique: The Revolution and its Origins*, is a detailed analysis of the conditions within Mozambique showing how these prepared a fertile ground for the revolution.⁴⁴ It examines the state of the economy, the role of the state, the reforms and assimilation of the African middle-classes into Portuguese culture and conditions in the countryside. Munslow demonstrates the extent to which Mozambique was ready for socialism by examining internal conditions in Mozambique before independence. He does not cover internal relations within the party itself. In general, what was found to be sparse in Mozambican historiography is opposition literature critical of FRELIMO, moving from the history of a longstanding scholarly tradition. Perhaps this attests to the limitations of the research, which could not delve into sources written in Portuguese because of the language barrier.

In the case of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) of Zimbabwe, some publications are one-sided in their portrayal of the exile politics of the organisation. A good example of this is a publication by David Martin and Phyllis Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*.⁴⁵ The foreword to this book was written by the leader of the ZANU (PF), Robert Mugabe. In its analysis of the experiences of ZANU during the period of exile, the book presents a heroic image. The focus is on the successes of ZANU, without examining its internal dynamics. The book examines how Mugabe led his party to power and outlines the process to the Lancaster House Conference of 1979. This paved the way to the 1980 elections securing Mugabe the presidency of Zimbabwe.

Terrence Ranger's book, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe*, presents a Marxist analysis of the struggle for liberation in Zimbabwe.⁴⁶ It examines the relationship between the military wing of ZANU, Zimbabwe National Liberation Army-

⁴² M. Newitt: *A History of Mozambique*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1995.

⁴³ *Ibid.* pp. 517–538.

⁴⁴ B. Munslow: *Mozambique: The Revolution And Its Origins*. Longman, London, 1983.

⁴⁵ D. Martin and P Johnson: *The Struggle For Zimbabwe*. Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 2001.

⁴⁶ T. Ranger: *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe*. Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1985.

ZANLA, and the rural inhabitants, whom Ranger refers to as the “peasant class”. Ranger undertook a comparative examination comparing the experiences of “African peasantries” in Mozambique, Kenya and Zimbabwe.⁴⁷ Ranger theorises his evidence heavily, to the extent that it becomes difficult to grasp the simple essence of the relationship between the party, the guerrilla army and the peasantry. Besides that he employs debatable theoretical concepts such as “peasant consciousness”, “class”, “class struggle”, without definition or explanation. This creates an imposing network of ambivalence, which evades factual criticism. His work examines the structure and ideological orientation of ZANU and compares it with the *Mau Mau* of Kenya and Frelimo of Mozambique. Ranger does not examine internal relations within the party. He emphasizes ideological support for ZANU and Frelimo for their Marxist inclinations and condemns the *Mau Mau* guerrilla movement for its nationalist and non-Marxist Pan-Africanist outlook.

C.M.B. Utete’s *The Road to Zimbabwe: The Political-Economy of Settler Colonialism, National Liberation and Foreign Intervention*, offers a new, balanced, critical and comprehensive perspective.⁴⁸ Despite the unclear Marxist theoretical language, Utete traces the foundations of the colonial settlement in Zimbabwe, the international context of national liberation and the route to independence. He examines “Zimbabwe nationalist politics” and focuses on the internal relations within ZANU.⁴⁹ He examines the foundations of the split, which occurred in 1976 within ZANU and the role of Frontline States, such as Tanzania and Zambia, in healing the split and forcing ZANU into premature negotiations with the Ian Smith government in the former Rhodesia. He is explicit on how the power struggle for the leadership of ZANU between Mugabe and the Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole affected the liberation movement and its resolution within the party through the unanimous election of Mugabe as leader of the organisation.

The historiography of the liberation struggle in Namibia (South West Africa) posits similar trends. There is a great deal of literature written in support of the liberation struggle led by the South West African People’s Organisation (SWAPO), particularly during the late 1980s, A SWAPO publication, *To Be Born a Nation: The Liberation Struggle in Namibia* is representative.⁵⁰ Peter Katjavivi’s book, *A History of Resistance in Namibia*, is a dress-rehearsal for the SWAPO publication.⁵¹ The two publications argue the case for Namibia’s independence. They trace the development of SWAPO as a liberation movement

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* pp.1–91.

⁴⁸ C.M.B. Utete: *The Road to Zimbabwe: The political Economy of Settler Colonialism, National Liberation and Foreign Intervention*. University Press of America, Washington , 1979.

⁴⁹ C.M.B Utete: *The Road to Zimbabwe*, pp. 116–120.

⁵⁰ SWAPO: *To be Born a Nation: The Liberation Struggle for Namibia*. Zed Press, London, 1981.

⁵¹ P. Katjavivi: *A History of Resistance In Namibia*. James Currey, London, 1988.

and show how it finally adopted the armed struggle as a strategy for liberation. Susana Smith further developed this line of thought in her book, *Namibia: A Violation of Trust*.⁵² She blames the South African regime for the war in Namibia detailing how it breached the provisions of United Nations resolution No 435. She portrays the liberation struggle waged by SWAPO as justified if not inevitable. None of these works interrogate the status of the organisation in exile or their internal relations within the organisation.

Denis Herbstein and John Evenson's, *The Devils are Among Us: The War for Namibia*, provides a fresh perspective.⁵³ It examines the history of SWAPO in exile and outlines all the problems (internal divisions) the organisation had to contend with in an exile environment. Obviously, the authors were advantaged by the fact that in 1988-1989, when their book was written, access to internal documentation was easier than in the past. They had access to internal documentation and key historical role-players. Drawing on a vast archive of unpublished material, including testimonies of political, military and religious figures, the book examines the war that ravaged Namibia from 1966 to 1989.

Randolph Vigne's article, "*The SWAPO of Namibia: a Movement in Exile*",⁵⁴ explains the internal dynamics of the exiled organisation. It examines the internal problems which nearly crippled the organisation in 1974. The rift was between the SWAPO leadership and the SWAPO Youth League. The intervention by the government of Zambia and other OAU officials to solve SWAPO's internal problems, is analysed. The author examines what he calls "SWAPO infiltration by the agents of the South African government" and shows how this generated conflict within the organisation.⁵⁵ He explains how the organisation dealt with these problems and maintained a sense of stability.

A new school of thought in the history of SWAPO was consolidated when Colin Leys and John S. Saul published, *The Two Edged Sword – Namibia's Liberation Struggle*, in 1995.⁵⁶ Somadoda Fikeni's thesis, "*Exile and Return – The Politics of Namibia's Returnees*", provides another valuable contribution which further bolstered the new approach in the writing about SWAPO in exile.⁵⁷ Both works came after the independence of Namibia, when sources which were previously unavailable were accessible to scholars of Namibian history and politics. John S Saul and Colin Leys focus specifically on SWAPO's politics of

⁵² S. Smith: *Namibia: A violation of trust*, Oxfam, Oxford, 1986.

⁵³ D. Herbstein and J. Evenson: *The Devils are Among Us: The War for Namibia*. Zed Books, London 1989.

⁵⁴ R. Vigne: SWAPO of Namibia: A Movement in Exile, *Third World Quarterly*, 9, 1, 1981, pp. 85–107.

⁵⁵ Ibid, pp. 85–107.

⁵⁶ C. Leys and J.S. Saul: *The Two Edged Sword – Namibia's Liberation Struggle*. Ohio University Press, Athens, 1995.

⁵⁷ S. Fikeni: *Exile and Return – The Politics of Namibia's "returnees"*, Unpublished MA Thesis, Queen's University, Ontario, Canada, 1992.

exile and show how a predominantly Ovambo ethnic leadership, headed by Sam Nujoma “carried over a certain sense of personal ownership of the movement from pre-SWAPO days” and kept “SWAPO’s political and military levers of power firmly within their own grip”.⁵⁸ While helping to establish a core of established and recognised leaders within SWAPO who survived the entire period of exile, it was a source of internal conflict within the organisation. Somadoda Fikeni provides a detailed analysis of the conflicts affecting SWAPO during the exile period. He discusses the “the Kongwa crisis of 1968 in Tanzania, the 1976 rebellion and the spy drama of the 1980s”.⁵⁹ Both Fikeni and Saul and Leys underline the important role that the SWAPO leadership played in ensuring the organisation overcame the moments of crisis and was eventually united.

In summary, this chapter demonstrates the exile political historiography of the PAC is limited but displays interesting trends. It is constituted by two opposing approaches, which assume a “for or against” form. These have been explained and their weaknesses pointed out. The emergence of a “new school”, which seeks to transcend the divide between the “old” and the opposing school, is introduced. The “new” school defined itself by way of projecting a synthesised and balanced perspective. Potential weaknesses of this new approach have been identified. The historiography of liberation movements outside South Africa has also been reviewed. It displays the underlying the conceptions and polarities which separate support from non-support literature and an opposing school of thought. The literature shows that all liberation movements in Southern Africa experienced similar problems such as internal splits and interference by the host country and the OAU. Some of the liberation movements succeeded in solving their internal problems. The key to success was decisive leadership and firm organisational foundations. This book extensively covers one aspect of the broad history of the PAC in exile, namely the development of conflict within the PAC. Existing secondary literature mentions, but does not adequately examine, this issue. One is acutely aware that as with every piece of research the book will have its own unique weaknesses which subsequent research will hopefully address.

⁵⁸ C. Leys and J.S. Saul: The Two Edged Sword, p. 42.

⁵⁹ S. Fikeni: Exile and Return, p. 3.

3 The PAC: Formation, Banishment and Road to Exile

This chapter provides the background to the study of intra-PAC relations during the exile period. It examines three important aspects in the history of the PAC. These include the factors leading to the birth of an Africanist tendency within the ANC, resulting in the formation of the PAC; the circumstances that led to the banning of the organisation by the National Party government of South Africa and the PAC's eventual exile. A brief overview of international African politics and the affect this had on developments within the ANC of South Africa in the late 1950s will be the starting point. An analysis of the internal politics of the ANC is necessary as Peter Raboroko (a National Executive Committee Member of the PAC in 1959) argues, "most of the foundation members of the PAC are former members of the League and these were all ex-officio members of the ANC".¹ It is not possible to understand the formation of the PAC without understanding the internal dynamics of the ANC.

The formation of the PAC was a long drawn-out process. It began with ideological debates within the ANC, particularly within the ANC Youth League. This led to the emergence of an "Africanist faction" within the ANC. This faction gradually consolidated itself over the years following the 1949 ANC Programme of Action and eventually launched itself on 6 April 1959, in Orlando Township, Johannesburg, as the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa. It was only in 1968, whilst in exile, that the organisation adopted the name "Azania" calling itself the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania.

Factors which led to the formation of the PAC

International ideological influences

Between the years 1900–1965 African politics outside South Africa was dominated by the rise of Pan Africanist ideas. During this period Pan Africanist ideas and organisations started to take root among African, West Indian and American Negroes residing principally in Europe and the United States. It is from these countries that a Pan Africanist ideological tendency was born, which ultimately spread to Africa.

¹ P.N Raboroko: Congress and the Africanists: The Africanist Case, *Africa South*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1960, p. 30; Mary Benson: *South Africa: The Struggle for a Birth Right*. Penguin Book, London, 1966, pp. 80–92; Confirmed in interview with Elliot Mfafa, King Williams Town, 1998; Interview with M Gqobose, Port Elizabeth, 1997.

Geiss' *The Pan African Movement*, defines Pan-Africanism in a manner which posits a "narrower/broader" dichotomy that is useful for interpretation. In the narrower sense, he defines Pan-Africanism as the political movement for the unification of the African continent, and in the broader sense, as political and cultural movements aimed at wider solidarity, i.e. anti-colonial solidarity or Afro-Asianism.² Peter Molotsi, a member of the exiled PAC defines Pan Africanism as "the beginning of a new consciousness" among Africans and people of African descent, which solidified into movements that "sought to cast relationships between Africans and non-Africans on a footing of mutual respect".³ John Crutcher defines it as an "interpretation of African history, prescriptions for what is to be done now, and predictions concerning Africa's destiny".⁴ The issue tacitly contained in the above definitions is that of Pan Africanism, which in broad terms embodies heuristic conceptions of historical materialism as understood and articulated from the point of view of Africans.

"Three identifiable and interlinked historical factors gave rise to Pan Africanism before it found an expression in Africa".⁵ These include "slave trade, European imperialism and colonialism in Africa, as well as racism and racial consciousness resulting from the first two factors combined".⁶ The early ideas of Pan Africanism which dominated the period 1900-1965 reflected influences stemming from a combination of these factors. Early Pan-Africanist ideas "included expressions of feelings of rejection and exile from the African "homeland", "Negro" solidarity in the face of White influence, a sense of a "lost" past, and a belief in the existence of a distinct "African personality" and common destiny, and in "Africa for the Africans".⁷ These ideas, sometimes referred to as "Proto-Pan Africanism", are characteristic of the embryonic phase of the Pan-African Movement.⁸ The early phase can be divided into two periods, 1900 to 1918, and 1919 to 1945. The period 1919 to 1945 differs from the earlier one in that a relatively well-developed Pan- African philosophy came into existence. Its leading proponents were W.E.B Du Bois and Marcus

² I. Geiss: *The Pan African Movement*, Methuen and Co. Ltd., London, 1974, p. 7; D.A.B Mahlangu: *From South Africa to Azania*, pp. 16–17; George Shepperson: "Notes on Negro American Influences on the Emergence of African Nationalism", *Journal of African History*, 1,2, 1960.

³ P.H. Molotsi: "Pan Africanism in Southern Africa: Evolution to a new ideology", *African Studies Association*, 26th Annual Meeting, 1983, p. 1.

⁴ J. Crutcher: *Pan Africanism: African Odyssey*, *Current History*, vol. 44, no. 257, 1963, p. 2.

⁵ D.A.B Mahlangu: *'From South Africa to Azania'*, p. 17.

⁶ V. B. Thompson: *Africa and Unity-the evolution of Pan Africanism*, Longman, London, p.3.

⁷ British Information Services: *Pan-Africanism*; pp.1–2; T.Karis and G.M. Gerhart, (eds.): *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. 5. Nadir and Resurgence, UNISA press, Pretoria, 1997, p.238 ; Hans Kohn: "Pan – Movements", in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, XI, pp. 545–554; J. Crutcher: *Pan Africanism: African Odyssey*, p. 1.

⁸ I. Geis: *The Pan African Movement*, Methuen and Co., Ltd, London, 1974, p. 14.

Garvey. It was during the 1920s that the Garveyist movement made significant impact on the ideology of Pan-Africanism. Ideas about “Negritude” and “African Personality” were contributions of the Garveyist movement. The two concepts, though different, emphasised the “oneness or the sameness” of Black people, “everywhere and at all times”.⁹ The essence of the Pan-African ideology centred on these ideas during the entire period beginning early 1900 until 1962. This was the formative period of Pan Africanism internationally. Numerous Pan African congresses took place during this formative period. The first of these, marking the beginning of the movement, was held in London in 1900. It was organised by a Trinidad lawyer, H. Sylvester-Williams, and its aim was to register protest against European occupation of African lands.¹⁰ The congress was attended by Dr W.E.B du Bois, who later became a leading theoretician and ideologue within the international Pan-African movement. This conference was followed by numerous later Pan-African conferences from 1919 onwards. The 1919 Pan African conference was particularly significant because it highlighted the plight of Africans in colonised parts of Africa and brought this to the attention of the League of Nations during its meeting in Paris. From 1937 onwards, the participation of African leaders, from various parts of Africa, in Pan-African Conferences became noticeable. This was the result of the formation of the International African Service Bureau, which brought together all types of Pan-African movements. African Leaders such as Jomo Kenyatta (former President of Kenya) and Dr N. Azikiwe, (former President of Nigeria), began to play a role during this period.

In 1945 a major Pan African conference was held in Manchester attended by the largest ever delegation from Africa. The declarations of this conference set the tone for the ideological model of South Africa’s Pan-Africanism. One of the resolutions affirmed by the conference made reference to the right of all colonial people to control their own destiny. It stated that “all colonies must be free from foreign imperialist control, whether political or economic. The struggle for political power by colonial and subject people is the first step towards, and the necessary prerequisite to, complete social, economic and political emancipation.”¹¹ These ideas were elaborated and sealed at the first Conference of Independent African States in Accra (Ghana) in April 1958 shortly after that country’s independence in March 1957. The deliberations of this conference influenced the formation of the PAC in the following year. The conference was widely covered in South Africa’s *Drum* magazine, a leading Africanist magazine at the time. *Drum* magazine representatives attended the conference. An article in *Drum* magazine, “Vision of a Happy Africa”,

⁹ A. Irele: Negritude and Nationalism. Heineman, London, 1981, pp. 83–84.

¹⁰ British Information Services: Pan-Africanism, p. 1; I. Geis: The Pan African Movement, p. 14.

¹¹ K. Nkrumah: Ghana: “I speak of Freedom” in The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah. International Publishers, New York, 1971, pp. 47–133; British Information Services: Pan Africanism, pp.4–5.

gave a detailed account of the deliberations at the conference.¹² The president of Ghana, Dr Kwame Nkrumah, became the leading champion of Pan Africanism in Africa. He was a source of inspiration to many young Africanists within the African National Congress of South Africa. Among the key deliberations of this conference was that independence dates be set for each territory in Africa.¹³ After the first Conference of Independent African States in Accra, a declaration of a “community of African states” was drawn up by Dr Nkrumah in 1959. The declaration was submitted to the Addis Ababa Conference of Independent African States in 1963. The declaration contained principles upon which the organisation of African Unity was founded in 1963.

The formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), in May 1963, marked the beginning of another phase in the development of Pan Africanism. An Africa-focused interpretation of the Pan-Africanist ideology, informed by the realities of Africa, started during this period. The approach was reality-focused in the sense that it articulated responses to the new challenges and tasks of post-colonial independence. These included building government institutions and establishing political authority for the newly independent states. The Pan-Africanism of this period emphasised support for decolonisation initiatives and struggles in other parts of Africa. The basic tenets were unity and co-operation in the political and economic spheres. It was during the OAU conference at Addis Ababa that the idea of an African parliament was mooted for the first time.

The significance of these developments lies in the influence they had on the thinking of the ANC, especially on the ANC Youth League. As Mahlangu rightly pointed out, “the nationalist fervour sweeping through the continent” of Africa had captured the imagination of the “small but growing number of Africanists” in the ANC from the late 1950s.¹⁴ The independence of Morocco and Tunisia in 1956, of Ghana the following year and the promise of independence of other British colonies within the near future, generated a mood of optimism which engulfed the continent of Africa and provided a basis for Pan Africanist optimism. The rise of the PAC of South Africa should not be viewed in isolation from these events. From the broader Pan-African movements outside South Africa, the Africanist in the ANC appropriated the meaning of ideas such as “self-determination for the Africans”, “Africa’s cause” and “African personality”. These became the core ideological tenets of the PAC.

¹² S. Motjuwadi: ‘Vision of a Happy Africa’, *Drum*, June 1958, pp.40–43.

¹³ Interview with Mr Madasa, Langa Township, Cape Town, 11 February 1987.

¹⁴ D.A.B Mahlangu: ‘From South Africa to Azania’ p. 31; R. Oliver and A. Atmore: *Africa Since 1800*, p. 288–314; P. Stiff: *The Silent War*, pp. 17–21; B. Leeman: *Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania (South Africa), 1780–1984*, pp. 150–209.

Local factors which led to the formation of the PAC

The broader political context in South Africa, as well as the bitter and drawn out political debate within the ANC, are the immediate factors which led to the formation of the PAC. The debate was more about the strategies to be used in the struggle against white supremacy and Apartheid than about a liberated South Africa. At the centre of the debate was the longstanding and much older ANC Christian Liberal tradition, which emphasised non-violence, multi-racialism and universal suffrage along the lines of British democracy. It was challenged by an emerging youth who espoused a tendency towards radical Pan- Africanism. The role of whites especially communists in the struggle for liberation, was among the issues debated. The debate and internal wranglings consumed the better part of the period after the 1952 Defiance campaign. Between 1957 and 1958, just before the final Africanist split, the debate had assumed the character of an ideological “civil war” within the ANC. Davies concludes that “throughout 1957 and 1958 the ANC was more preoccupied with a civil war over its own ideological future than any mass anti-Apartheid campaign”.¹⁵ The Africanists and the members of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) both wanted to take over the ANC, giving rise to an ideological civil war.¹⁶ This continued until 1958, the year when a group of young Africanists decided that they had finally reached the parting of ways with their comrades in the ANC.

Ideological debate and conflict within the ANC predates the period 1952 – 1958. It can be traced as far back as the early 1940s. Even before the formation of the Youth League in 1944, debates were prevalent among the ANC youth. They criticised, for instance, the approaches of the ANC to the South African political situation. The youth criticised the conciliatory stance of the ANC during the 1920 African mine workers’ strike and the 1922 Rand revolt. The formation of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU), (propelled by Garveyist Pan Africanist influences), whose membership overlapped with that of the ANC and its links with the International Socialist League (ISL), all brought in a new radical element which found great appeal among the ANC youth. A more intellectually structured political debate started with the formation of the Youth League in 1944. Its national executive committee had personalities such as A.M. Lembede (who became its chairman), O.R. Tambo (secretary), W.M. Sisulu (treasurer), A.P. Mda and N.R. Mandela. The leading ideologue and theoretician in the Youth League was Anton Mziwakhe Lembede, a young attorney from Natal. Immediately after it was formed, the Youth League adopted the Congress Youth League Manifesto, a document

¹⁵ S.M. Davis: *Apartheid Rebels*, p.11.

¹⁶ B. Leeman: *Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania*, pp. 119–120; S.M. Davis: *Apartheid Rebels*, pp. 1–11.

which expounded a conception of the South African liberation struggle radically different from the one expressed in the ANC's original and early documents, such as the constitution and the "African's Claim".¹⁷ This document was formulated by Anton Mziwakhe Lembede with the assistance of A.P Mda, who later became one of the founder members of the PAC.

The Youth League Manifesto laid the basis for South Africa's Pan Africanism. It provided theoretical foundations which Mangaliso Sobukhwe, the founding President of the PAC, developed further. The Manifesto declared, "for the African, without exception, self-determination is the philosophy of life which will save him from the disaster he clearly sees on his way".¹⁸ It further stated that "the goal of all our struggles is Africanism and our motto is Africa's cause must triumph".¹⁹ A Pan-Africanist outlook and the need to encourage the achievement of "African unity" were well articulated and encouraged in the document. On the subject of African unity, the document states that "We believe in the unity of all Africans from the Mediterranean Sea in the North to the Indian and Atlantic Oceans in the South; Africans must speak with one voice".²⁰ It encouraged self-reliance among Africans and it emphasised that the National liberation of Africans will be achieved by Africans themselves. The document further emphasizes a rejection of foreign leadership of Africa. The rejection of foreign leadership went hand in hand with the rejection of foreign ideologies, especially communism. This debate about the role of communists in the ANC ensued later. Whilst accepting socialist economic principles, Lembede and his group in the Youth League strongly "believed that the sole purpose of communists within the congress was to undermine the ideology of African nationalism".²¹

The views enshrined in the Youth League Manifesto, characterised later as the "Lembede tradition", were claimed by the PAC as sole custodian after its formation. This tradition, especially its militant undertones and its assertion of principles of self-determination of the oppressed African majority, openly conflicted with "traditional ANC policy of liberal reformism" and led to long lasting debates which laid the foundation for a prolonged and final split.²² The Lembede tradition was later developed and further radicalised by

¹⁷ T.R. Kono: Maxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa (Azania), pp. 148–188; T. Karis & G. Gerhart: From Protest to Challenge, Vol. 3. Hoover Institute Press, California, 1972, pp. 413–425; corroborated by the interview with M Gqobose, Port Elizabeth, 28 July, 1997.

¹⁸ ANC: Manifesto of the ANC Youth League, 1944, reproduced in (eds.) T Karis and G. Gerhart: From Protest to Challenge, Vol. 3, p. 77.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 77.

²⁰ *Ibid.* p. 77.

²¹ ANC: Manifesto of the ANC Youth League, 1944, reproduced in (eds.) T. Karis and G. Gerhart From Protest to Challenge, Vol. 3, p. 77.

²² T. Kono: Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 54; M. Benson: The Struggle for a Birth-right, pp. 84-88; Interview with Mnqojana, Umtata, 21 December 2002.

Robert Mangaliso Sobukhwe. After the death of Lembede, Sobukhwe assumed the position of an ideologue and intellectual giant within the Youth League. In his inaugural speech at the launch of the PAC in 1959, he clearly defined the ideological tenets of the new movement especially on issues such as racialism and multiracialism.

It would be folly to conclude that it had only been issues of a theoretical nature which laid the grounds for the birth of the PAC. The deteriorating material circumstances of the majority of Africans, marked by a shortage of land in rural areas, the industrial Colour Bar, the Pass Laws, high taxation levels and a sharp increase in living costs (which characterised the country's post World War II economy), played their part in justifying the need for a radical Africanist ideological strategy.²³ Concrete life and material conditions inside the country, the political squabbles within the ANC and the influences from Pan African movements abroad, all contributed to the birth of a Pan- Africanist ideology and movement inside South Africa.

Internal conflicts within the ANC

As already indicated, the seeds for the birth of the PAC germinated from within the ANC. Stephen Davies sums up the internal situation in the ANC by saying that “radically different perceptions of the white race characterised the debate within the post-war ANC, between Africanists, who considered anti-Apartheid protest a Blacks-only affair, and multiracialists, who had faith in achieving change in alliance with philosophically compatible whites”.²⁴ This is contrary to the view expressed by one of the informants during the research. He argued that the protest against Apartheid was never made “a Blacks-only thing” but was for everyone, including progressive whites whom the Africanists encouraged to stage protests in their communities, rather than coming to lead Black communities against Apartheid.²⁵

From the internal debates in the ANC, the Congress Youth League came up with the 1949 Programme of Action. The Programme of Action asserted, among other things, the right of African people to self-determination, rejection of segregation, Apartheid, trusteeship or white leadership over Blacks, and political independence. Political divisions and tensions ensued over the implementation of the provisions of the rather militant Programme of Action, which did not command the support of the ANC leadership. “Thus

²³ S. Terreblanche and N. Nattrass: *The Political Economy of South Africa*, pp. 6-21; R. Horwitz: *The Political-economy of South Africa*; M. Lipton: *Capitalism and Apartheid*, pp. 14-227.

²⁴ S.M. Davies: *Apartheid Rebels*, p.10.

²⁵ Interview with M Dyan, Cape Town, 11 September 2000.

instead of launching a campaign of positive action in accordance with the provisions of the Programme of Action, the leadership together with its multi-racial allies organised a campaign of passive resistance”.²⁶ In other words, the Defiance Campaign of 1951-52 was itself not a result of consensus in the ANC, especially in the Youth League; nonetheless, it was carried out. “When the ANC joined with the South African Indian Congress in the Defiance Campaign and later linked up with whites, coloureds and Indians in the Congress Alliance, Africanists feared that the canons of Lembedism were being violated”.²⁷

The suspension of the campaign by the ANC leadership in 1953 increased existing dissatisfaction and political tensions. When the leadership called off the campaign, they argued that the Defiance Campaign, “as a sensible form of the struggle”, had to come to an end because the people of South Africa had made their mark and had shown white people that they could be militant.²⁸ This aroused anger and frustration among many Youth League members who, in turn, argued that the aim of the campaign was not to simply make a mark but to liberate Africans from oppression and racial domination. The youth in the ANC, were angered by the fact that the campaign was called off at a point when it was “gaining momentum, spreading throughout the country”.²⁹

From 1952 Africanists within the ANC started organising themselves into tightly knit groups spread all over the country. The inner circle of the Africanist group officially launched the Bureau of African Nationalism, which operated in all four provinces of South Africa, but was more active in the Eastern Cape. During the Defiance Campaign, the Bureau of African Nationalism “circulated pamphlets urging resisters not to allow the campaign to be taken over by minority interests, but to keep faith with the resolutions of the Program of Action”. The writers of the pamphlets were R. Sobukhwe, A.P. Mda, T.T. Letlaka, C.J. Fazzie, and J.N. Pokela (who all later became leaders of the PAC) and their work was distributed to ANC Youth League members throughout the Union”.³⁰ The Bureau of African Nationalism was, in essence, a secret watchdog over ANC policy. In November 1954, the Africanists founded a newspaper, which became their mouthpiece, the *Africanist*. It was issued by the “Bureaux of African Affairs”, led by AP Mda, based in East London.³¹ To further consolidate themselves within the ANC, the *Africanist* estab-

²⁶ Pan Africanist Congress: *The National Mandate in Azania*, n.d. p. 47.

²⁷ S.M Davis: *Apartheid Rebels*, p. 10; Also corroborated in an interview conducted by Walter Toboti with TM Ntantala, Harare, 1984.

²⁸ M. Benson: South Africa: *The Struggle for a Birth Right*, p. 157; Interview by Walter Toboti with T.M. Ntantala, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, 1984; Interview with M. Gqobose, Port Elizabeth, 28 July 1996.

²⁹ Interview with Mr M. Gqobose, Port Elizabeth, 28 July 1996; Interview with N. Raboroko, Soweto, 3 July 2000; Interview with Malcom Dyan, Cape Town, 20 December 2000.

³⁰ B. Leeman: *Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania*, pp. 121-123.

³¹ Interview with M. Gqobose, Port Elizabeth, 1996; Interview with Malcom Dyan, Cape Town, 2000;

lished a covert Africanist Central Committee called “Cencom”. Its main purpose was to agitate and recruit from within the ANC. “Cencom” was constituted by among others, R. Sobukhwe, A.P. Mda, P.K. Leballo, J.N. Pokela, S. Ngendane, P. Molotsi and V. Sifora, most of whom became executive committee members of the PAC when it was formed in 1959.³²

The period towards the adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955 was marked by increasing tensions and political infighting resulting from the insubordination of Africanists in the various branches of the ANC nationally. The adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955 by the Congress Alliance added fuel to the fire. To the Africanists the Freedom Charter was a “Charter of Slavery”, “a political bluff”, a “charade” representing a barricade to resist the transfer of effective political power to the African people and to ensure that political control remains in the hands of whites.³³ They had serious problems with the statement on the preamble of the Charter which indicated that “South Africa belongs to all who live in it Black or White.”³⁴ To the Africanists, South Africa belongs, by right, to its original African inhabitants. Besides that “co-operation with democratic organisations from other racial groups”, led the Africanist leaders to believe that “the ANC had lost its identity as a purely Africanist revolutionary organisation and had surrendered its leadership to non-African sections of the liberation movement”.³⁵

From 1956 to 1958 the longstanding ideological feud within the ANC had become so bitter that it was clear that the organisation was heading for a major split. This finally occurred at the Transvaal ANC Congress on November 2 1958. Selby Ngendane, one of the leading Africanists, submitted a document to the ANC with a list of resignations and a written submission which stated that Africanists were “launching out openly on their own as custodians of ANC policy as originally formulated in 1912, reviewed in 1944 and pursued up to the time of the birth of liberal multi-racial alliance with the popular Programme of Action of 1949 as their basic starting point”.³⁶ Africanists in other parts of the country followed suit and broke away from the ANC in the various regions. In Natal the secession was announced “without fanfare at the annual conference in Durban in mid-

Interview with Elliot Mfafa, Kingwilliams Town, 22 July 1998.

³² B. Leeman: *Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania*, p. 128.

³³ N. Raboroko: *Congress and the Africanists: The Africanist Case*, pp. 24–38; P.K. Leballo: The Nature of the Struggle Today, in *The Africanist*, 1957.

³⁴ R. Suttner and J. Cronin: *30 years of the Freedom Charter*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1986, p. 112.

³⁵ Pan Africanist Congress: *National Mandate*, p. 51.

³⁶ Pan Africanist Congress: *National Mandate*, p. 51.; Also stated in a Letter “giving notice” of Africanist dissociation from the ANC (Transvaal), signed by S.T. Ngendane, Secretary to Mr Speaker of the ANC (Transvaal) Conference, November, 2, 1958, in T. Karis and G.M. Gerhart: *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 3, pp. 505–506.

December by A.B. Ngcobo, a Natal Youth League leader and former treason trialist”.³⁷ The Cape and Free State provinces followed later, but in the latter province, Africanist grassroots support was initially small when compared to the other provinces. The Free State province is where the ANC had been founded and was therefore regarded by people in the province as the home of the Congress tradition.

Highlights of the day of the inauguration of the PAC

The first national meeting of the Africanist Movement was held at the Orlando Community Hall, 4–6 April 1959 and was called the “Africanist Liberation Congress”.³⁸ This took place over the Van Riebeeck Day holiday weekend. “Placards carrying nationalist and Pan Africanist slogans lined the walls of the hall: ‘Africa for Africans, Cape to Cairo, Morocco to Madagascar’, ‘Imperialists Quit Africa’, ‘Forward to the United States of Africa’ and ‘Izwe Lethu I Afrika’ (‘Africa, our land’)”.³⁹ The meeting was attended by approximately four hundred delegates from all over South Africa. Out of that four hundred, there were only fifteen women and the Transvaal membership dominated the conference in terms of representation.⁴⁰ Zephania Mothopeng, a member of the National Working Committee of Africanists which prepared for the inaugural conference of the PAC, was elected to chair the conference proceedings. It was the same National Working Committee, which planned and directed the anti-pass campaign on the 21 March 1960. There are allegations that two police spies were among the many people who attended the conference. They were Municipal policemen, ‘Mr Isaac (NA64150) and Mr David (NA642141)’.⁴¹ They were instructed by the Acting Senior Superintendent of Orlando Police Station to attend the conference and record its proceedings. Mr Isaac was able to get admittance into the conference on the 4th and the morning of the 5th, but was excluded on the last day because he was not in possession of a membership card. Mr David was able to negotiate his way through on the last two days of the conference. PAC leaders, interviewed in the research who attended the inauguration of the PAC in 1959, expressed strong doubts about the possibility of “spies” being present.

Oral evidence shows that at the meeting of the Convention “like in any other political organisation, there was obvious jostling for positions in the National Executive”.⁴² A certain Dr Peter Ntsele, for example, had his hopes pinned on the position of becoming

³⁷ T. Karis and G.M. Gerhart: *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. 3. pp. 307–322.

³⁸ “Africanist Liberation Congress”, *Search Light South Africa*, No. 8, January, 1992.

³⁹ T. Karis & G.M Gerhart: *From Protest To Challenge*, Vol. 3. p. 314.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 307–322; B. Leeman: *Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania*, p. 156.

⁴¹ *Search Light South Africa*, No. 8, Jan. 1992, p. 90.

⁴² Interview with M Gqobose, Port Elizabeth, 29 July 1996.

President of the organisation but was disappointed by the results of the election. He immediately broke away to form his own party, which came to be known as the Pan African Freedom Movement ceasing after his death in 1960.⁴³ Serious divisions dominated the conference during the elections of National Executive Committee members. The division was between the “party intelligentsia” and the “non-intellectuals.” The former faction was embodied in the charismatic personality of Mangaliso Sobukhwe and the latter was represented by Josias Madzunya, from Alexandra Township in Johannesburg. The former faction triumphed and the leadership of the PAC became dominated by the educated elite. This underlying schism created problems for the organisation from the very beginning, resulting in a number of people being expelled within the first few months of its formation. One could take the case of Madzunya as an example. Initially, he stood as candidate for the position of treasurer in the party, but lost to another party intellectual, Abednego Ngcobo. This is said to have disgruntled Madzunya to the extent that he influenced the bulk of his following from Alexandra Township not to participate in the 21 March 1960 anti-pass campaign.⁴⁴ The above scenario indicates the longstanding disagreement in the PAC even before the organisation was banned. Police infiltration of the organisation since the early stages is a possibility which cannot be ruled out. The semblance of unity which the organisation displayed before exile was attributable largely to the personality and leadership style of Mangaliso Sobukhwe.⁴⁵

One of the key issues on the agenda was the name of the new organisation. Among the names which were mooted were “Africanist Liberation Congress, the All African Congress, the Africanist Congress and the Africanist Revolutionary Party”⁴⁶. The feeling of most Africanists was that the term, “Congress”, had to be retained for sentimental reasons. It was almost at 3.00am on the morning of April 6 that the name, Pan Africanist Congress was eventually adopted. The leadership of the movement was elected on the last day of the Convention. The National Executive of the PAC comprised:

National President: Robert Mangaliso Sobukhwe

National Secretary: Potlake Kitchener Leballo

National Treasurer: Abednego Ngcobo

National Organiser: Elliot Mfafa

⁴³ Interview with J Dlangalala, January 1990; Interview with P. Raboroko, Soweto, 3 July 2000.

⁴⁴ D.A.B. Mahlangu: *From South Africa to Azania*, p. 82; B. Leeman: *Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania*, pp. 155–160.

⁴⁵ D.A.B Mahlangu: *From South Africa to Azania*, pp. 68–73; P.L Berger and B. Godsell: *A Future South Africa: Vision, Strategies and Realities*, p. 122.

⁴⁶ T. Karis G.M. Gerhart: *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol.3. p. 371; B. Leeman: *African Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania*, p. 156.

Secretary for Pan African Affairs: Peter Molotsi
 Secretary for Foreign Affairs: Selby Ngendane
 Secretary for Publicity and Information: Z.B. Molete
 Secretary for Education: Peter Raboroko
 Secretary for Culture: Nana Mahomo
 Secretary for Labour: Jacob D. Nyaose
 Secretary for Finance and Economic Development: Hughes Hlatswayo
 Additional members: Zephania Mothopeng, Howard S. Ngcobo, C.J. Fazzie, MG Maboza.⁴⁷

One of the major puzzles of the elections of the PAC leadership was that the main intellectual giant behind Africanism, A.P. Mda, was not elected to the National Executive Committee. The argument by Leeman, that it was strategic to have him out of the power politics so that he could be the “party’s eminence grise” and have him concentrate on refining ideological positions of the PAC and questions of strategy, “behind curtains” remains unconvincing.⁴⁸ One would probably concur if the rationale was that it was his choice not to take an official position because of his very shy character and lack of confidence in the sustainability of the new movement.⁴⁹ The Convention finalised four documents, which became basic policy documents: the “PAC Manifesto”, the “Constitution”, the “Disciplinary Code” and the “Oath of Allegiance”.⁵⁰ The fifth document was the opening speech by the President of the Congress. It is important to examine these documents briefly because they outline not only the ideological standpoint of the PAC, but the reasoning behind the strategies of the organisation.

Principles and strategies enshrined in the organisation’s basic documents

The *Pan Africanist Manifesto* was, by and large, the product of A.P. Mda and R.M. Sobukhwe’s efforts. It is broadly formulated and, as a result, can be interpreted in many ways. In essence, it explains historical relations between Africa and Europe, focusing mainly on imperialism, colonisation, de-colonisation and independence in various parts

⁴⁷ T. Karis and G.M. Gerhart : *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol.3, p. 371.

⁴⁸ B. Leeman: *Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania*, p. 156.

⁴⁹ The interview with Mchitheka, Gugulethu, Cape Town, 2000, indicates that AP Mda was a shy person, who believed in small group or one-on-one conversations. He was also opposed to the idea of forming a new organisation outside the ANC, but was persuaded by his colleagues in the Africanist inner circle to tender his resignation from the ANC and join the new organisation.

⁵⁰ PAC: *Pan Africanist Manifesto*, in *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe*, 1949–1959 p. 315.

of Africa. It provides a theoretical framework, which links the situation or conditions of oppression and exploitation in South Africa with global socio-economic and political forces. At a more specific level, it describes the situation in South Africa and portrays a picture of a racially polarised country, riddled with irreconcilable contradictions mainly between Blacks and Whites. Pan Africanist terminology such as “the white exploiters” and “African exploited”, “the foreign oppressor” and the “indigenous oppressed” appear frequently throughout the Manifesto.⁵¹ It describes Africans as “subject peoples who are criminally oppressed, ruthlessly exploited and inhumanly degraded” and their interests were depicted as “in sharp conflict and in pointed contradiction with those of the White ruling class”.⁵² The Manifesto posits the final triumph of Africans over white domination in “the militant progressive forces of African nationalism” which were “bound to crush the reactionary forces of white domination”.⁵³

Other crucial issues covered by the Manifesto include the PAC position on the question of race as well as the “historic task” of the organisation. On race the Manifesto states, “African people are very much proud of their race – the human race. They recognise no inescapable fundamental differences among members of the three main branches of that race: the Caucasoids, Mongoloids and Afrinoids”.⁵⁴ In line with this view, the PAC regarded itself as a non-racial movement, despite the fact that it did not have whites as members of the organisation. In its view, multi-racialism, which was what the ANC and Congress alliance were associated with, was “racialism multiplied”.⁵⁵

The Africanist position on the question of race was summed up in Sobukhwe’s inaugural address. He stated, “in Africa the myth of race has been propounded and propagated by imperialists and colonialists from Europe, in order to facilitate and justify their inhuman exploitation of the indigenous people of the land. It is from this myth of race with its attendant claims of cultural superiority that the doctrine of white supremacy stems”.⁵⁶ Sobukhwe’s emphasis on the oneness of mankind characterised the humanitarian aspect of South Africa’s Pan Africanism. His inaugural address at the launch of the PAC provided a body of thought which constituted the fundamental character of the ideology of the PAC. These ideas were further inscribed in the PAC Manifesto. The events following

⁵¹ Pan Africanist Congress of Azania: Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe, 1949–1959; The Pan Africanist Manifesto, no date, p. 69.

⁵² PAC: Pan Africanist Manifesto, in Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe, 1949–1959, p. 69.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

⁵⁴ PAC: Pan Africanist Manifesto, in Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe, 1949–1959, p. 71.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 71; R.M. Sobukwe: Opening Address- PAC Inaugural Conference, 1959, in Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe, 1949–1959, pp. 30–31.

⁵⁶ R.M. Sobukwe: Opening Address – PAC Inaugural Conference, 1959, in Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe, 1949–1959, pp. 30–34.

the Sharpeville massacre and the incidence of *Pogo*, in particular, which resulted in the murder of white civilians and children, undermined the humanitarian expressions of the PAC's Manifesto.⁵⁷ As a result, the organisation was faced with a challenge to prove in practical terms that it was not a "racist" movement and that it had room for all South Africans "at the rendezvous of victory".⁵⁸ The Africanist outlook of the PAC, as outlined in the Manifesto, was not formulated in line with any broad strategy. Its theory of non-racialism was not matched by practice because the organisation did not have white members, with the exception of Patrick Duncan, who joined the exile PAC in 1963. In addition to this, its avowed militancy alienated not only white South Africans, but the whole white world. Hence, the PAC did not enjoy the same financial support from the international community, as did the ANC.⁵⁹

The PAC's *Disciplinary Code* is central to the organisation and operations of the PAC. It is more specific and outlined policies and procedures to be followed to ensure order and discipline within the organisation. Paradoxically, it provided the opportunity for leadership autocracy and abuse of power. Autocratic powers which the PAC acting President, Potlake Leballo, invoked in exile, were in line with what the *Disciplinary Code* stipulated.

The *Disciplinary Code* is a statement of the code of conduct for PAC members. It seeks to provide disciplined and co-ordinated goal-directed activity within the PAC. When it was originally formulated, the Code was to be administered by a Disciplinary Tribunal of Justice consisting of three members appointed by the National Executive Committee. The Tribunal of Justice was tasked to enforce the provisions of the Disciplinary Code. Expression of ideas, spreading of ideas or release of certain information, especially to the media, acquisition of knowledge, personal habits and relations with other liberation movements were all to be governed by the Disciplinary Code. The last two sections of the Code relate to "Democratic Centralism" and 'factionalism'. They are problematic in the sense that they provide a loophole for the abuse of power by PAC leaders. As will be shown later, the leadership invoked disciplinary procedures to deal with political power contestations and ideological dissent. This occurred more frequently during the reign of Potlake Leballo (1962–1979).

"Democratic centrism" defined "that the power of directing the Pan Africanist Congress is centralised in the National Executive Committee which acts through the President who wields unquestioned power as long as he acts within the grounds laid down by

⁵⁷ In the *Race Relations Journal*, South African Institute of Race Relations, 1963, it is stated that five Whites, including children, were killed by *Pogo* operatives as they lay sleeping at the roadside near Bashee, in the Transkei.

⁵⁸ S. Biko: *I write what I like*, Heineman, London, 1987.

⁵⁹ H. Barrell: *The Outlawed South African Liberation Movements*, pp. 52–93.

the decisions of the organisation which must have been democratically arrived at. The President shall have emergency powers, which he may delegate, to suspend the entire Constitution of the Pan Africanist Congress so as to ensure that the movement emerges intact through a crisis. At that time he directs the Movement by decree, and is answerable for his actions to the National Conference”.⁶⁰ The definition of crisis is not explicit in the Constitution, and, as a result, this clause of the disciplinary code was invoked rather opportunistically by the PAC leadership as a convenience to get away with dictatorial and corrupt agendas.

On “factionalism” the Code stipulated that “where normal processes of free discussion fail to curb factional tendencies, then firm iron discipline should come into play, and factional elements, no matter how important, should be chopped off without ceremony”.⁶¹ This was practised frequently by the embattled PAC leadership, during all the periods of conflict, hence the numerous expulsions which occurred during the exile period.

The *PAC Oath of Allegiance* is a sworn statement, which PAC members had to sign. It is not clear whether it was indeed sworn by all PAC members but the “old guard” who joined in 1959 and 1960 before the organisation was banned had to take an oath before joining the organisation. Point 2 of the Oath states that “I will irrevocably obey and act upon the orders, commands, instructions and directions of the N.E.C of the Pan Africanist Congress” and point 5 states that “I accept the leadership of the Pan Africanist Congress. Should I fail to honour this Oath, I will accept death as Punishment.”⁶² It is only when one examines what happened within the PAC during the exile period that it is possible to indicate the extent to which some of these undertakings were exercised to the letter in isolated circumstances. Unfortunately, the PAC Constitution (before it was amended after the unbanning of the PAC), did not make the necessary provisions to guard against possible abuse of the “Disciplinary Code” and “Oath of Allegiance”. “The Constitution” dealt more with the structure of the organisation, financial management and the levels of authority within the PAC.

Banishment and road to exile

From the day the PAC was founded, there was a passionate pledge by its founders to “unite and rally the African people into one national front on the basis of African nationalism” and overthrow “white, racist, settler colonial domination” in order to establish

⁶⁰ Pan Africanist Congress: *Disciplinary Code*, in *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukhwe*, 1949–1959, p. 91.

⁶¹ *Ibid.* p. 92.

⁶² “The Pan Africanist Oath of Allegiance” in T.G. Karis and G.M Gerhart, (eds.): *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. 3, p. 537.

and maintain “the right of self-determination of African people for a unitary, non-racial democracy”.⁶³ According to Peter Raboroko, the ruling National Party dubbed the formation of the PAC “a hot-bed of the most dangerous and poisonous agitators in the country”.⁶⁴ PAC members interpreted this to mean they were regarded as a serious threat, more so than the ANC, by the National Party government.

An unfolding programme of action, which would lead to “total independence” in 1963, was decided at the All-African People’s Congress in Ghana in 1958, and launched by the PAC resulting finally in the banishment of the organisation and exile.⁶⁵ This placed the PAC and the South African struggle for liberation on the map of world politics. The activities of the PAC during the short period of legal existence inside the country, especially the anti-pass campaign of 1960, led to its banishment. The “Positive Action Campaign” of 21 March, 1960, which culminated in the Sharpeville Massacre and the incidence of *Pogo* in 1961 were interrelated events. The former led to the banishment of the PAC, hence the road to exile, and the latter signalled the manifestation of underground PAC activity inside the country.

A non-violent, positive, action campaign, launched by the PAC on March 21 1960, demanded the scrapping of the notorious pass laws and a living wage for African workers, which had been 34 Pounds three Shillings and four Pennies minimum wages for the average African worker per annum.⁶⁶ Thousands of PAC supporters, especially from the Southern Transvaal and the Western Cape, responded to the PAC’s call. They marched to the police stations demanding arrest for not carrying passes. “They left their wives at home to look after children”.⁶⁷ With their leaders in front, (including Mangaliso Sobukhwe), they marched under the slogan “no bail no defence, no fine”. This was supposedly the test of readiness to “serve, sacrifice and suffer” – as the PAC motto stipulates – for the cause of liberation.⁶⁸ According to Saul Dubow, the PAC’s “campaigning slogan, ‘No bail, no defence, no fine’ signalled a style of politics that was altogether more confrontational and uncompromising than that of the ANC”.⁶⁹

In the *Cape Times*, dated March 22 1960, it was reported that “an unknown number of Africans were shot dead, seven buildings including two schools, were destroyed by fire, and many Africans were wounded, according to the first reliable reports of rioting last

⁶³ Pan Africanist Congress: *Constitution*, p. 2.

⁶⁴ P.N. Raboroko: *Congress and the Africanists: The Africanist Case*, p. 27.

⁶⁵ B. Leeman: *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania*, pp. 98–99.

⁶⁶ Interview by A. Mahlangu with Malcom Dyan, Cape Town, October, 1990.

⁶⁷ Interview with Mxolisi, Cape Town, March 1988.

⁶⁸ Pan Africanist Congress of Azania: *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe 1949–1959*.

⁶⁹ S. Dubow: *The African National Congress*, p. 61.

night. The Minister of Justice, Erasmus, who visited Langa, told a *Cape Times* reporter that it was impossible to give accurate figure of the casualties”.⁷⁰ The report came from a *Cape Times* reporter and two of his colleagues who were at Langa police station. They were besieged, for more than two hours, by an angry mob of Africans following a police shoot-out, which left at least twelve people seriously injured. The *Cape Times* car was set alight by the mob and its driver was killed. According to the *Cape Argus*, dated March 23 1960, Prime Minister Verwoerd argued in Parliament that the “native disturbances” were simply “a periodic phenomena” which could have something to do with “poverty and low wages”. He said that if the disturbances were seen against the background of a global pattern, “then it would be realised that they did not have anything to do with any South African government policy. They had nothing to do with the reference books against which the Pan Africanist Congress campaign was supposed to be aimed. ... During the past month similar trouble has occurred in the Belgian Congo, in the Cameroons, in Nyasaland and in other countries”.⁷¹ According to Verwoerd, the revolt was not a result of the government’s oppressive policies as such, but was just an uprising, which could happen in any country.

A state of emergency was subsequently declared in about 80 districts on 30 March 1960 and thousands of activists from various organisations were arrested. This precipitated a march by approximately 30 000 people from Langa and Nyanga townships and the marchers were led by Ata Kgosana, a student from the University of Cape Town. Similar marches occurred in Durban, in White City, Johannesburg and Simonstown in the Western Cape. People demanded the release of their leaders from prison. In Cape Town the march was dismissed in an orderly manner after top police officers promised the leaders of the march to set up an appointment with the Minister of Justice to discuss their grievances. The meeting never took place. Instead, five PAC leaders who were instrumental in organising and leading the march, including Kgosana, were arrested and later charged for inciting political unrest.

The ruthless reaction of the South African government to the PAC’s mass action created a number of unforeseen problems for the eleven-months-old organisation. Its top leadership was imprisoned and Sobukhwe was sentenced to three years imprisonment and his colleagues in the national executive to two years in prison. Others in the lower echelons of the organisation were given 18 months prison sentences. To make matters worse, both the ANC and the PAC were formally banned on April 8 1960. This created problems of leadership and continuity for the PAC. The early termination of its legal

⁷⁰ *Cape Times*, 22 March, 1960.

⁷¹ *Cape Argus*, 23 March 1960.

existence meant that the organisation could not develop “a tried and tested leadership”, fine-tune its analyses and theoretical formulations, “or test the efficacy of its founding documents” which were designed for political organisations operating under conditions of legality.⁷²

This orchestrated a mood for violent confrontation with the government. The overall impact of the PAC message of “*Izwe Lethu*” (our land) had captured the imagination not only of those who could relate directly to the land, the landless migrant workers from the barren countryside, but many African youths whose lives were suddenly “turned around by the political crisis South Africa found itself caught up in”⁷³. All the same, the events of 21 March 1960 pushed the PAC into the limelight of South African politics, a significant achievement for a young organisation.

The March 21 1960 anti-pass campaign is still a contentious issue between the ANC and the PAC. From the perspective of the ANC, the PAC hijacked a programme that was not of its making. The ANC had agreed at its annual conference in December 1959, that there should be a nation-wide campaign of active mass resistance against the regime in Pretoria. “The planned forms of mass resistance were to be national stoppages of work, burning of passes and later sabotage against the oppressors’ vital installations. By March 1960, the ANC massive campaign was already underway throughout the length and breadth of South Africa. Thus the masses of the oppressed people were successfully mobilised for the 31 March Anti-Pass national stoppages of work”.⁷⁴ These plans were disrupted, according to the ANC, by the call made by the PAC to the people of South Africa, stating that they should not carry passes and should go and surrender at the nearest police stations. According to the PAC sources, the campaign was planned by the organisation at its inaugural Convention and was not intended to disrupt the ANC’s plan of action. It was intended, instead, to assert the new organisation’s role in the unfolding of the political struggle.

Nonetheless, the masses of the people responded to the PAC’s call and this was demonstrated by huge turnouts in the Western Cape and Southern Transvaal regions. As a result of the campaign, 69 people died in Sharpeville, two people died in Langa, Cape Town and many others were wounded in various parts of the country.

The events of March 21 1960 were widely publicised and constituted a crisis the South African government never anticipated. There was widespread panic among white South Africans and increasing pressure from the international community. Panic among white

⁷² Interview with Mgxashe, Cape Town, March, 1998.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: The PAC of South Africa – Whom does it represent?, n.d.

South Africans manifested itself in various ways. "In Cape Town and the Transvaal gun shops sold out their stocks within days to panicky whites, and inquiries about emigration inundated the offices of Canadian and Australian diplomatic representatives".⁷⁵ The international community for the first time directly responded to the situation in South Africa. On March 22 1960 the American State Department in a statement directly condemned the South African government, but, on the other hand, called upon Africans to "obtain redress for their legitimate grievances by peaceful means".⁷⁶ The United Nations totally condemned the South African Government for the Sharpeville Massacre and called upon it to "initiate measures aimed at racial harmony based on equity".⁷⁷

The National Party government, in spite of various threats and pleas, remained unchanged in its policies and laws affecting the Black majority. The only concession it made was to declare a moratorium on pass arrests. At the same time police patrols were increased around the clock in African townships. Meetings were banned, raids, road blocks and arrests became the order of the day. On March 30 1960, the government declared a state of emergency "and assumed all powers to act against all forms of alleged subversion, including the powers to detain indefinitely any person suspected of anti-government activity".⁷⁸ This precipitated widespread reaction from African communities that were immediately affected as a result of the implementation of the emergency regulations. In Cape Town where the police started to round-up suspected PAC activists, beating and arresting people in Langa and Nyanga townships led to a march to the city which involved over 30 000 people. The unrest spread to Durban, Port Elizabeth and Bloemfontein.

Instead of introducing reforms, on April 18 the government introduced the Unlawful Organisations Act of 1960, which effectively banned the PAC and the ANC. "Besides empowering the government to ban the ANC and the PAC, and any other organisations attempting to further their aims, the Act provided that persons found guilty of intimidating others to stay away from work or to commit any offence by way of protest against a law, would be liable to a maximum penalty of a 500 pounds fine, or five years imprisonment, or 10 strokes or a combination of any of these".⁷⁹ As a result of this legislation, all layers of PAC leadership were affected. In fact many of them were put behind bars and the Johannesburg office of the organisation was closed down. The organisation was thrown into a state of complete disarray and had to survive under conditions for which it had never prepared itself.

⁷⁵ T. Karis and G.M. Gerhart: *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. 3, p. 335.

⁷⁶ T. Karis and G.M. Gerhart: *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. 3, p. 336.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* p. 336.

⁷⁸ T. Karis, and G.M Gerhart: *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. 3, p. 335.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* p. 375.

The PAC leadership, as though in anticipation of these events, had instructed Nana Mahomo and Peter Molotsi, on 20 March 1960, to leave the country in order to make the PAC's case known to the international community and the rest of Africa and establish contacts. Mahomo and Molotsi laid the foundations for the establishment of new PAC bases outside South Africa and raised funds for the creation of the first PAC rudimentary infrastructure in Maseru (Lesotho) and PAC missions in Accra (Ghana), London (England) and Cairo (Egypt).⁸⁰ The Lesotho office of the PAC was officially opened in Bonhomme House in Maseru in 1962, when P.K. Leballo arrived from South Africa, after serving a two-year prison sentence for his role in the anti-pass campaign to take over as acting President of the exiled PAC.⁸¹ The ANC, before Sharpeville, had already sent its deputy president, Oliver Tambo, "out of the country to represent it in Africa and abroad. These men were joined later by a few activists who left South Africa for Basutoland, Swaziland, and Bechuanaland during the emergency".⁸²

As a result of the government's reaction to the political turmoil, the PAC and the ANC went underground and re-emerged with a declaration that they were not going to walk along the non-violent path of previous years. The ANC founded Umkhonto we Sizwe on December 16 1962. The PAC resurfaced in 1961 inside the country bearing the name *Pogo*, which, since then, has been described as the PAC's military wing.

In summary, the formation of the PAC is better understood in the context of what happened internationally, from 1900–1960 as well as the long-drawn out and bitter ideological debate and wrangling within the ANC. The rise of Pan African movements outside the continent of Africa and the participation of African leaders in these movements resulted in the appropriation of Pan Africanist ideas by Africans in the various countries of Africa. Pan Africanist ideas were articulated to fit the specific conditions of colonialism in Africa. The leading ideologue in Africa was Dr Nkrumah of Ghana. The 1960s was a period when many dramatic changes and developments took place in Africa. Many colonial states were liberated from their colonial masters. These events generated a mood of optimism, which influenced the development of Pan-Africanist ideas in South Africa, resulting in the formation of the PAC in 1959, one year after the All-African People's Conference held in Ghana, in 1958.

The ideology of the PAC embodied external Africanist influences as well as South African experiences. This is clearly illustrated in the basic documents of the organisation,

⁸⁰ B. Leeman: *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania*, p. 100; Transcript of an interview conducted with Malcom Dyan by D.A.B. Mahlangu, Cape Town, October, 1990.

⁸¹ B. Leeman: *Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania*, p. 177; Interview with E. Mfafa, Kingwilliams Town, 23 July 1998.

⁸² B. Leeman: *Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania*, p. 350.

namely the “Pan Africanist Manifesto”, the “PAC Disciplinary Code”, “The Constitution”, the “Oath of Allegiance” and, most importantly, “Sobukhwe’s inaugural address”. These documents show how the Africanists conceived of the South African struggle as part of the broader struggle of the peoples of Africa against colonialism, imperialism and white domination.

Developments in South Africa, especially within the ANC, contributed to laying the ground for the formation of the PAC. The ANC was involved in an ideological war within itself. The debates dividing the ANC centred more on questions of strategy than substantive details about a future South African state. The Africanist faction within the ANC, and especially in the Youth League, grew steadily following the aftermath of the Defiance Campaign until the final split in 1958. In April 1959 the Africanists launched the Pan Africanist Congress on their own.

The formation and ideological genesis of the PAC needs to be analysed against the backdrop of the general trend of decolonisation in Africa, especially during the 1960s. The tendency to link the birth of the PAC to emerging tendencies and conflicts within the ANC needs to be carefully avoided as it delimits a broad and complex phenomenon. Of course the radicalisation of the Youth League does form an important point of departure, but I believe that it has been over emphasised in existing literature.

The ideology of the PAC, if carefully examined, straddles the divide separating “derived” ideology from “inherent” ideology. It combines crucial elements of both. It is derived in the sense that it draws heavily on outside influences as first articulated by Africans in America, the West Indies and other parts of Europe. As a body of thought, Pan-Africanism was brought into South Africa and the rest of Africa from the outside. Pan-Africanism is an inherent ideology in the sense that it combines and expresses shared historical experiences of peoples of African descent from everywhere in the world. It presupposes an African mode of existence, which it then casts as an ontological phenomenon.

In the context of this background it is clear that the PAC was bound to stumble, especially in exile. Firstly, the organisation had not fully interrogated its ideological underpinnings. It had not effected a smooth transition from the broad descriptions of Pan-Africanism to an elaborately South African version of Pan-Africanism. In addition to this, PAC ideology did not inform or was not informed by any clear and well thought out strategy and experience. This will become clear in the chapters that follow.

4 The Exile Experience: Impact on the Functioning of Liberation Movements

The impact of the exile experience on the functioning of liberation movements in Southern Africa is a broad and complex subject. As a result this chapter does not provide full details of this experience, but extrapolates from the vast information and generalisations, which constitute the framework within which the exile experience of the PAC should be understood. The significance of this chapter in relation to the chapters which follow, is that it provides a background, context and state of affairs in the Southern African region during the period when liberation movements were in exile. It seeks to outline the main political developments in the region in order to underline the argument it advances. The argument is that the exile environment was precarious and hostile, but did present opportunities for liberation movements which, even though marginal, would otherwise have been unavailable in their home countries.¹ The chapter defines the frontiers of conflict, the diplomatic manoeuvres and examines profiles of countries at the centre stage of the conflict. It concludes that all these factors accounted for the exile experience of liberation movements.

At the core of this experience was the imperative to operate discretely. Factors which characterised the exile environment of all liberation movements in Africa included intervention in their internal party affairs by the OAU-Africa Liberation Committee (the main funder), pressure from the OAU and Frontline States to fight the “enemy” or negotiate political settlements, contestation among liberation movements (between the PAC and ANC of South Africa, for example) for a hegemonic terrain and authentic status before the OAU, host countries and the United Nation. In general, fear, pressure, uncertainty, competition and in-party rivalries, (attracting interference by the host countries), characterised the exile experience of liberation movements. The intensity and impact of these factors varied over historical periods. It should be noted that the vastness of the issues dealt with in this chapter disrupts the logical flow of the narrative, the discussion has therefore been divided under sub-headings. A clearly defined periodisation has been framed in order to develop more intelligible categories of issues and events.

¹ T. Lodge: Black Politics in South Africa since 1945. Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1983.

Conceptual and theoretical issues

Among the problems underlying the analysis here are issues of conceptual meaning. They relate firstly, to the use of the concept “experience” as an analytical category. The immediate question here “is how experience itself can be conceptualised and understood as a constituent in the production of historical meanings”.² Experience, as an analytical category is slippery and elusive. I have therefore chosen to establish a working definition befitting the context of the discussion. At one level, experience can be conceptualised as a process and an object, i.e. “the cumulative body of knowledge associated with it”.³ On the second level, experience refers “to lived experience of the past not so much in itself, but rather in terms of the congealed knowledge that is derived from it, both individually and collectively. It consists albeit contentiously, in the lessons of the past”.⁴ Without engaging in extensive essentialist debate about the meaning of “experience”, I use the concept to describe and analyse the salient and common aspects of lived, collective experiences of individual liberation movements that went into exile within Southern Africa during the period 1960 to 1994.

The second issue surrounds the meaning of “exile” or exile liberation movement. “Scholars have conceptualised and theorised about the exile phenomenon in different ways”.⁵ Some have adopted a “legal definition of political exiles as refugees”, as expressed in the United Nation’s Convention of 1951:

A person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his (her) nationality and is unable owing to such fear, unwilling to avail himself (herself) of the protection of the country, or who not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.⁶

Studies conducted by Leon and Rebecca Grinberg on “Psychoanalytic perspectives on migration and exile” and Egon Kunz’s “The Refugee in flight: kinetic models and forms of displacement”, conspicuously lack reference to the exiles’ political activities, which was

² M. Pickering: History, Experience and Cultural Studies, Macmillan Press, London, 1997, p. 91.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁵ S. Fikeni: Exile and Return, p. 1; L. Grinberg and R. Grinberg: Psychoanalytic Perspective on Migration and Exile, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1989, pp. 156–165; E. Kunz: “The Refugee in Flight: Kinetic Models and Forms of Displacement”, International Migration Review, Vol. xxxvii, No.2, 1973.

⁶ S. Khasiani: “Refugees research in Africa: Problems and possibilities” in International Migration, Vol. xxviii, No. 3, 1990, p. 371.

“the essence of exile life as opposed to that of other groups of refugees”.⁷ The political activities of exiles were an expression of their self-understanding and mission in exile. The most revealing definition of political exiles, adopted in this book, is advanced by Y. Shain in his article, “Who is a political exile? Defining a field of study for political science”, Shain describes a political exile “as an expatriate who engages in political activities” directed against the political system in the home regime. The activities are intended to create conditions or circumstances that will be favourable to his or her return.⁸ Flowing from this definition, it is clear that individuals who were members of organisations, which pursued these goals constituted an exile liberation movement.

Very little attempt is made in academic research and popular literature on exile liberation movements to relate exile experience to its effect on the functioning of liberation movements. Nathan Shamyryra’s work, *Liberation Movements in Southern Africa*, for example, does not examine either the exile experience of liberation movements in Southern Africa or the impact of such experience on the functioning of the liberation movements.⁹ His work focuses instead on broad theoretical questions such as the “nationalist or class” character of the liberation movement in Southern Africa, the nature of imperialism in Southern Africa and the problems of liberation organisations in Namibia, Zimbabwe, Angola and Mozambique. The most informative aspect of his work, however, is on “the liberation strategy of Frontline States”.¹⁰ He investigates the role of the Frontline States in the liberation of Southern Africa and their efforts to encourage unity among liberation movements. In addition he outlines issues of political economy, which were fundamental to the many problems emerging states in Southern Africa had to contend with in the 1970s. These problems fostered a relationship of partial dependence on apartheid South Africa and the West. Andrew Prior’s work on “South African Exile Politics” displays problems identified in Shamyryra’s work.¹¹ He does not survey the exile environment or identify the kinds of problems confronting exile liberation movements. Instead, he examines the history of the ideological relationship between the ANC and the South African Communist Party (SACP) without indicating how this relationship was affected by conditions of exile.

⁷ S. Fikeni: “Exile and Return”, p. 3.

⁸ Y Shain: “Who is an exile? Defining the field of study in political science”, International Migration, Vol. xxxvi, no.4, 1988, p. 387.

⁹ 196. N. Shamyryra: Liberation Movements in Southern Africa. African Studies Program, Indiana University, 1978, pp. 1–36.

¹⁰ N. Shamyryra: Liberation Movements in Southern Africa. p.18.

¹¹ A. Prior: “South African Exile Politics: A Case Study of the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party”, Journal of Contemporary African Studies, Vol. 3, Nos. ½, October 1983/ April 1984, pp. 181–196.

Tom Lodge's analysis of the exile experience of the PAC and ANC (1960–1975) and the ANC (1976–1986), lacks detail of the actual experience of exile. It is a descriptive rendition of the exile environment explaining the theoretical categories into which the problems of exile liberation movements could be classified.¹² While this is important in so far as it sheds light on what the exile environment was like during the period 1960–1975, it raises more questions than it answers. One of these questions raised would be the typical exile experience of a liberation movement in Southern Africa. Would such experiences vary over time or would there be generic elements which transcend historical periods?

The gaps in the literature about the exile experience of liberation movements attest to the tendency to examine the exile experiences of liberation movements as isolated incidents. This approach portrays the experience of exile movements as discrete and fragmented, devoid of connecting threads. It highlights the failure to identify, examine and integrate common features typical of the experience of exile. In addition to this, no analysis has been undertaken on the way in which exile liberation movements functioned in general, and the impact of their common experiences on their operations. John Marcum's work, *The Exile Condition and Revolutionary Effectiveness: Southern African Liberation Movements*, is the only essay which attempts to survey the environment of exile and examine the technical and existential problems of liberation movements in Southern Africa.¹³ Marcum's work, even though widely celebrated, is general. It is weak on sources as many of these were unavailable at the time of his research. The veil of secrecy around the functioning of liberation movements and conditions of exile had not yet been lifted. Therefore his analysis of the role of South Africa in the destabilisation of neighbouring states hardly went beyond the analysis of media reports. In addition, the views of historical actors during this important period were lacking at that time and so did not inform his analysis.

This chapter seeks to redress this gap by examining the broad experience of exile liberation movements and showing the way in which these experiences impacted on their functioning. The chapter demonstrates that exile experience possesses a comprehensive and intelligible structure by defining the connecting threads which weave together the seemingly discrete elements of exile experience. Firstly, it examines the nature of the exile environment, but focuses on Southern Africa. Secondly, the common experiences of liberation movements, their reactions and adaptation to the exile environment are analysed. Lastly, an overview of the impact of exile experience on the functioning of these move-

¹² T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*; T. Lodge: The African National Congress of South Africa, 1976 to 1983, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 3, Nos. 1/2, October 1983/April 1984, pp. 1–27.

¹³ J. Marcum: *The Exile Condition and Revolutionary Effectiveness: Southern African Liberation Movements*, pp. 263–275.

ments is offered. This provides the background to an analysis of the PAC's way of dealing with the experiences of exile.

The exile environment: An overview

By "exile environment" reference is made to the Southern African socio-political and economic environment. This infers the totality of circumstances defining the nature of life in the host countries where outlawed political movements continued their liberation struggles against unpopular regimes in their home countries. The way various liberation movements dealt with the circumstances of exile constituted their experiences of exile.

The exile environment was characterised by threats, opportunities and challenges, which were the result of the interaction of a variety of factors both internal and external to the host countries. This framework informs the understanding and analysis of exile experiences of liberation movements in Southern Africa.

For the exile liberation movements, the Southern Africa environment was generally precarious, dynamic and unstable. These characteristics manifested themselves over time. The dialectic of continuity and change defined the character of the exile environment, despite historical specificity and peculiarities of certain experiences.

During the period 1960 to 1990, the exile environment was characterized by a pervasive counter-insurgency war causing devastation across the Southern African continent.¹⁴ Simultaneously, the face of Southern Africa was rapidly changing as one African country after another obtained independence. Counter-insurgency was nonetheless mounting. It was led and fed by the Portuguese occupied territories of Angola and Mozambique until 1975, Rhodesia until 1980 and apartheid South Africa until 1994. As a result, "no neighbouring state" was "able or willing to provide a secure rear base for guerrilla infiltration into South Africa, and none seemed likely to do so openly" until 1994.¹⁵

There are three periods which make the analysis of the exile environment intelligible, the period 1960 to 1968, 1969 to 1976 and 1977 to 1990. What informs this periodisation are the events which occurred in Southern Africa, which profoundly impacted on the region and changed the dimensions of unfolding events. The period 1960 to 1968 was a period of the establishment of the "first generation" of independent states in Southern Africa. During this period, Tanzania gained independence in 1961, in Kenya the *Mau Mau* insurrection was over and Kenya became independent in 1962. Malawi and Zambia

¹⁴ P. Stiff: The Silent War: South African Recce Operations, 1969–1994. Galago Publishing, Alberton, 2001, pp. 36–37.

¹⁵ H. Barrell: The Outlawed South African Liberation Movements, p. 53.

followed in 1964,¹⁶ Botswana and Lesotho in 1966 and Swaziland in 1968.¹⁷

These developments generated a mood of optimism among the colonised peoples of Southern Africa. The “winds of change” statement of Harold Macmillan captured the nature and trend of developments in Africa during this period.¹⁸ At the same time, counter-insurgency was on the rise. The South African government began to establish its apparatus of counter-insurgency in the three former British Protectorates. The police mobile units (PMUs) were set up in Lesotho and Swaziland in 1963. “The PMU was a paramilitary, formed ostensibly for border security”, but in reality it was a South African police agency which served the role of alerting South Africa about the presence of PAC, ANC and SWAPO guerrillas in Lesotho.¹⁹ In 1965 the white government in Rhodesia declared a “Unilateral Declaration of Independence” and the South African government announced (1967) that the SA police would fight together with Rhodesian security forces to combat acts of terrorism against Rhodesia and South Africa.²⁰ In May 1968 the first counter-insurgency group, the “Hunters” was formed inside South Africa. It was initially constituted by members of the South African Irish Regiment, a citizenry force that was part of the South African Defence Force (SADF).²¹ The same year the SADF leadership decided to concentrate on Special Force warfare and counter-insurgency rather than conventional warfare. This set the tone for the developments, which characterised the period 1969 to 1976.

From the late 1960s to 1976, the optimism of this period contested the mounting intransigence of the remaining colonised states such as Angola, Mozambique, South West Africa (Namibia), Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and South Africa. The role of Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana, as locations of counter-insurgency activities, increased to varying degrees. From 1971 to 1976 the South African government, through its intelligence wing, BOSS (Bureau of Security Service), launched an initiative aimed at the destabilisation of Zambia, the home of the ANC, code named ‘Operation Dingo’.²² This marked the beginning of a proliferation of similar covert operations against neighbouring states. Between the years 1975 and 1976, South Africa was involved in the war in Angola. The Ango-

¹⁶ R. Oliver and A. Atmore: Africa since 1800, Panaf Books, London, 1979, p. 274; P. Esterhuysen: Africa A-Z, Continental and Country Profiles, Africa Institute, Pretoria, 1998, pp. 26–362.

¹⁷ P. Esterhuysen: Africa A-Z, Continental and Country Profiles, pp. 90–335; O. Geyser: Détente Southern Africa, Institute of Contemporary History, Bloemfontein, 1976, p. 30.

¹⁸ Rand Daily Mail, 4/2/1960; O. Geyser: Détente Southern Africa, p.13; B. Leeman: Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania (1780–1994), p.159.

¹⁹ B. Leeman: Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania, p. 183.

²⁰ M. Horrell: ‘Political Movements-in-exile and guerrilla fighters’ in G. Maarsdorp and A Whiteside (eds.): Action, Reaction and Counter Revolution, pp. 116–124.

²¹ P. Stiff: The Silent War, p. 62.

²² Peter Stiff: ‘The Silent War’, p. 39; E Rhodie: The Real Information Scandal, pp. 95–96.

lan war had a significant impact on the political developments in Southern Africa and heightened the level of tensions between the communist East (represented by the former Soviet Union) and the capitalist West (represented by the United States of America). The independence of Mozambique in 1975 and Angola in 1976 and the socialist inclination of the regimes in these territories further contributed to this heightening of tension.

The following period 1977 to 1994 was dominated by a “silent war” waged by the South African government in collaboration with Rhodesian security forces (initially between 1977 and 1980 including ex-Rhodesian soldiers and intelligence groups from 1980 to 1994) against the Frontline States.²³ Essentially, this involved a covert and tacit war against liberation movements in their host countries.

Alongside the tacit wars, strategic and diplomatic initiatives by the South African government culminated in bilateral agreements, an example of which was the “Nkomati Accord”, between South Africa and Mozambique in March 1984.²⁴ These developments forced liberation organisations such as the ANC to shift the focus of their military and political strategies. They decided to wage war inside the borders of South Africa, hence the uprisings of 1984 to 1986. Even in the PAC the emphasis was on the “home-coming” initiative, a strategy designed to make the revolution assume an internal character, giving rise to their notion of a people’s war. As a result, the period was characterised by increased mass mobilisation against Apartheid inside the South African borders. Uprisings, which occurred from June 16 1976 and again from March 1985, were important landmarks showing the changes of strategy and attempts to revive the liberation struggle within the borders of South Africa. At the same time more space for the operation of liberation movements such as SWAPO, the ANC and the PAC, was opened outside South Africa following the independence of Zimbabwe in 1980. This period was essentially one of despair as well as hope for the peoples of Southern Africa.

Hope was generated by the fact that the majority of Southern African states had already gained their independence. The independence of Zimbabwe and the commitment of the new government in Zimbabwe to support the liberation movements added to these feelings.²⁵ There was despair in the sense that the Communist block, which was a major support to the liberation movements in Southern Africa, was on the brink of collapse. The economies of would-be socialist governments such Mozambique, Tanzania, Angola

²³ For details see: Peter Stiff: *The Silent War*; J. Hanlon: *Beggar Your Neighbours: Apartheid Power in Southern Africa*. Catholic Institute for International Relations, London, 1986.

²⁴ D. Venter: *South Africa and the Comity of Nations: From Isolation to Integration*. Africa Institute, Pretoria, 1998, pp. 1–48; J. Hanlon: *Beggar your neighbours*, pp. 142–144; P. Stiff: *The Silent War*, pp. 370–377, 380–386.

²⁵ D. Martin and P. Johnson: *The Struggle for Zimbabwe; The Chimurenga War*, pp. 300–335.

and Zambia were not strong enough to sustain support for South African exiles for much longer. On the other hand, the role of the Frontline States as beacons of hope for freedom was beginning to intensify. These issues will be broadly examined in the later sections of this chapter, in an attempt to explain the broad context of the exile conditions. This will involve an examination of the socio-political and economic conditions of the “Frontline States” (which included Botswana, Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique and Angola with Zimbabwe joining in 1980), the role of the OAU, the former British Protectorates (which included Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana), and the super-powers (such as the US) and lastly, the roles of the governments of Rhodesia, Portugal and South Africa, during this period. This analysis is intended to frame the context of exile experience and outline the environment of exile liberation movements in Southern Africa.

The Frontline States and the OAU in the Southern African liberation struggle

The two organisations which were critical players in Southern Africa and on the entire African continent were the OAU and the Frontline States. The Organisation of African Unity formed in 1963, was the umbrella organisation of all African states. The Frontline States emerged in the context of the broad mandate of the OAU as stated in the OAU Charter. The OAU Charter committed all member states to a fight for the eradication of colonialism in its different forms.²⁶

The emergence of the “Frontline States Phenomenon”

The Frontline States can be defined as a grouping of independent Southern African states such as Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe and Botswana, sharing a common vision about the political and economic developments in Southern Africa and common policies towards South Africa, based on their adherence to the Lusaka Manifesto of 1969 and the Dar-es-Salaam Declaration of 1975.²⁷ The Frontline States began as an informal consultation forum between the Tanzanian President, Julius Nyerere and Zambian President, Kenneth Kaunda, in the mid 1960s. Negotiations between the two heads

²⁶ OAU: Charter of the Organisation of African Unity. Preamble and Article II (1) (d); D. Venter: Africa and the Comity of Nations, p. 1.

²⁷ C. Legum: ‘The Southern African Crisis, Darkness at the end of the tunnel’ in C. Legum (ed.): Africa Contemporary Record-Annual Survey and Documents, 1981–1982. African Publishing Company, 1982, pp. A 41–42; D. Venter: South Africa and the African Comity of Nations, pp. 1–6; R.F Weisfelder: ‘The Southern African Development Coordinating Conference: A New Factor in the Liberation Process’ in T.M. Callaghy (ed.): South Africa in Southern Africa-The intensifying Vortex of Violence. Praeger, New York, 1983, pp. 239–252.

of state was precipitated by their concern about “the institutional paralysis that characterised the formulation of African positions on Southern Africa by the OAU”.²⁸ Apparently the OAU had many voices with respect to Southern Africa. “To achieve a consensus on a specific course of action with 46 member countries was almost impossible. Nyerere and Kaunda felt it necessary to evolve a regional framework to address problems relating to liberation movements and the future of Southern Africa in general. The OAU’s most important contribution towards this end was to situate the Liberation Committee in Dar-es-Salaam. This essentially gave Tanzania a headstart in making significant contributions to the course of liberation. It enabled Nyerere to weave an elaborate set of friendships with potential leaders of independent states in Southern Africa”.²⁹ As Nyerere explained,

Long before the armed struggle in Zimbabwe and Namibia started, the only real FLS were Tanzania and Zambia. Kaunda and I decided that we should invite representatives of liberation movements in Mozambique and Angola. The two of us should not be discussing strategies for liberation without them. This is how we began to invite the leaders of Mozambique and Angola to our meetings. At that stage Tanzania and Zambia provided guerrilla camps. We would receive recruits, train them and equip them with arms to go out and fight. I used to tell them that after independence we needed a liberated zone of independent states in Southern Africa. Once we had these independent countries stretching from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic that would be a really powerful challenge to South Africa. We all agreed to this.³⁰

The informal consultation between Nyerere and Kaunda was gradually developed and broadened to involve Zaire, Kenya, Uganda and Botswana, following the independence of the latter in 1966. The consultation forums that took place afterwards, resulted in the formulation of the Lusaka Manifesto in 1969. Zaire, Kenya and Uganda were soon out of the process because of their ambivalent positions with regard to the support of the liberation movements and their internal political problems, which made it difficult for them to commit to the Lusaka Manifesto. The consultation forum evolved into a larger close-knit group after 1975, when Mozambique and Angola were included, following their independence. The perception of a distinct sub-regional system in Southern Africa appeared increasingly attractive to the heads of state.

Since 1975, the context in which the FLS emerged was characterised by the expansion of geographical and political boundaries of decolonisation following the liberation of Mozambique in 1975 and Angola in 1976. This provided an opportunity to establish

²⁸ G.M. Khadiagala: *Allies in Adversity: The Frontline States in Southern African Security, 1975–1993*, Ohio University Press, Ohio, 1994, pp. 4–25.

²⁹ G.M. Khadiagala: *Allies in Adversity: The Frontline States in Southern African Security, 1975–1993*, pp. 24–25.

³⁰ J. Nyerere: North-South Dialogue, in *Third World Quarterly*, 6, no.4, 1984, pp. 835–836.

a framework for collaboration in order to resolve regional conflicts. The independence of Angola “bequeathed a legacy of extra-regional intervention in Southern Africa”, which had a significant impact on the process of political change which occurred after 1976.³¹

The context was characterised by the threat and resistance of white minority-ruled regimes in Southern Africa, especially before 1976. The informal alliance, which included South Africa, Portugal and Rhodesia, was arrayed against independent Africa. With the strong backing of South Africa, the informal tripartite alliance was instrumental in not only blunting the wave of decolonisation that was sweeping over much of Southern Africa, but also in undermining the independence of liberated former colonies.³² Considerable stakes in economic arrangements with South Africa, Portuguese presence in NATO and a general ambivalence towards national liberation characterised Western attitudes towards the region”.³³ Given this background, one would understand why great powers could not display a sense of urgency with regard to the need to alter the situation in Southern Africa. The involvement of the Soviet Union, China and Cuba in the Angolan war was the only instance causing the great powers to act swiftly. It underlined the significance of the war in Southern Africa to global peace and the balance of power.

The Frontline States were recognized by the OAU as champions of Southern African affairs in the OAU during the period under discussion. One of the main tasks of the OAU was to formulate an “African strategy with regard to the problems in Southern Africa”.³⁴ With the formation of the FLS, this activity became a shared one between the two organisations. Active opposition to minority rule in Southern Africa and support for the liberation movements became the criteria used after 1975 to determine the eligibility of a state to be a member of the Frontline States. The liberation of Southern Africa became the major reason for the existence of the Frontline States.

Towards the end of the 1970s, the activities of the FLS went beyond the promotion of regional conflict resolution and began to encompass issues of regional economic development. In 1980 the Southern African Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) emerged as an offshoot of the various initiatives of the Frontline States to address issues of regional economic development. Whereas the Frontline States facilitated political liberation through diplomatic initiatives and political support for liberation movements, the

³¹ G.M. Khadiagala: Allies in Adversity, p. 20.

³² A.T. Mugomba: Small Developing States and External Operational Environment, in Yearbook of World Affairs, Stevens and Sons, London, 1979, pp. 201–216; Barry Buzan : ‘A framework for regional Security analysis’ in B. Buzan, G. Rizvi and R. Foot (eds.): South Asia: Insecurity and Great Powers, St Martin Press, New York, 1996, pp 3–36.

³³ G. Kennan: Harzadous Courses in Southern Africa, in Foreign Affairs, 49, No. 2, (1971), pp. 218–236; AW. Nielsen: The Great Powers in Africa, Praeger, New York, 1979, pp. 350–363.

³⁴ D. Venter: Africa and the Comity of Nations, p.2.

SADCC's role was to support economic liberation "through coordinated development initiatives". One of the major goals of the SADCC was to rebuild the shattered economies of member states (Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Malawi and Zimbabwe) and reduce economic dependence, particularly on South Africa.³⁵ Unlike the association of Frontline States, the SADCC charter was based on the international recognition of independent states within Southern Africa. Ideological differences, particularly among Lesotho, Swaziland and Malawi on the one hand (with Botswana sitting uncomfortably in the middle) and the Frontline States was put aside and emphasis was placed on those issues, which united them as Southern African states. They recognized the importance of liberating their economies from excessive dependence on the Republic of South Africa. They needed to "overcome the imposed economic fragmentation" and coordinate efforts towards regional and national economic development.³⁶ The SADCC relied on foreign donors for project funding and on collective efforts aimed at getting the supplies of products from member states rather than from South Africa. The strategy of the new organisation emphasized the common ground among members and avoided tensions that might result in divisions.

What is important to note is that relationships, whether good or bad, generated among member states in these structures, were an issue to be dealt with carefully by the exile liberation movements. It was important for the latter to do a diplomatic balancing act in order to preserve sanctuaries already acquired and maintain the goodwill of all Southern African states. To the PAC and the ANC this was critical, not only for the material support they needed, but also for infiltration routes into South Africa.

Profiles of the Frontline States

This section provides an overview of some of the outstanding aspects of the states which constituted the Frontline States of Southern Africa and provides an explanation of why liberation movements were afforded certain treatment in certain countries and not in others.

The Frontline States can be grouped in the following manner: Tanzania and Zambia constitute one category because they were the first to obtain independence, were the founder members of the FLS movement and were the home of liberation movements

³⁵ R.F Weisfelder: The Southern African Development Coordinating Conference: A New Factor in the Liberation Process, in T.M. Callaghy (ed.): South Africa in Southern Africa-The intensifying Vortex of Violence, pp. 239–252.

³⁶ A. J. Nsekela (ed.): Southern Africa: Towards Economic Liberation, Rex Collings, London, 1981; J. Hanlon: Beggar Your Neighbours, p. 19.

such as the ANC, SWAPO, ZANU, PAC and BCM. The second group is the 'BLS' states (i.e. Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland) which were former British protectorates. The third category is the former Portuguese territories of Angola and Mozambique, and lastly Zimbabwe.³⁷



Fig. 2 Leaders of the Frontline States: Kenneth Kaunda (Zambia), Julius Nyerere (Tanzania) and Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe). (from right to left)

Tanzania and Zambia

The two countries obtained their independence in the early 1960s, Tanzania in 1961 and Zambia in 1964. Both economies were primarily producers of raw material during the colonial era. After independence they had to deal with the legacy of underdevelopment which increased their dependence on South Africa and foreign investment.

Zambia was economically dependant on South Africa. In 1984 Zambia ran a trade deficit totalling over US\$100 million³⁸. Zambia's dependency on South Africa was worsened by the fact that the country is land-locked without access to a port and harbour

³⁷ D. Venter: *South Africa and the African Comity of Nations*, p. 10.

³⁸ D. Venter: *South Africa and the African Comity of Nations*, p. 11; J. Hanlon: *Beggar your Neighbours*, pp. 17–26; L.T. Kapungu: 'Southern Africa and the Role of SADCC in Sub-regional Development' in Y. El-Ayouty (ed.): *The Organisation of African Unity after Thirty Years*. Westport, Cape Town, 1994, pp. 44–51.

facilities. Her dependant economic status was aggravated by the decline in copper prices since 1975. Zambia's dependence on copper was the root cause of many economic problems during this period. "The high price of oil and the low price of copper had combined to throw a series of positive balance of payments into deficit; since 1975, Zambia has had a positive balance of payments except in 1979, when the value of copper and cobalt rose momentarily. Between 1974 and 1978, Zambia's terms of trade deteriorated by 52 percent. From a peak in 1974, copper prices fell by 40 percent in 1975, while import prices rose by an average 16 percent per year".³⁹ The economic difficulties the country was facing provoked political discontent which resulted in two failed attempts to overthrow President Kaunda, first in October 1980 and then in June 1981.⁴⁰ Trade Union strikes and political unrest in the townships resulted in a repressive and defensive stance by the government. President Kaunda defended his one-party polity and would not tolerate criticism. Because of the economic and internal political pressures, the President of Zambia was often forced to enter into negotiations which sacrificed his standing as a member of the Frontline States and was constantly in conflict with other members who could not understand his departure from a principled position.

Like Zambia, Tanzania also ended up in a difficult position. Three years after the formation of the state of Tanzania, President Nyerere announced at the Arusha Conference in October 1967, a policy for the reconstruction and development of Tanzania based on socialist principles. This came to be known as "African Socialism". The broad policy objectives of the new economic approach were social equity, self-reliance, and transformation in all spheres of life to eliminate poverty.⁴¹ The manner in which the new approach to socialism was implemented created hostilities among the rural population who were forced to leave their villages to occupy the "Ujamaa" villages.⁴² By the early 1980s the total failure of "Ujamaa" caused people to drift back to the lands they had left. They were now hostile to the government. The Tanzanian socialist policy served to isolate the country from Western countries, some of which were keen to support Tanzanian development. Besides that, the policy was forced upon rural people who were sceptical from the very beginning.

Domestic problems were not only limited to the economic policies of Nyerere. "There had been some Zanzibari discontent, especially since 1988 with the continuing union between Zanzibar and mainland Tanzania".⁴³ The debate around the viability of one-

³⁹ World Bank: World Bank Report. Oxford University Press, London, 1981, p. 78.

⁴⁰ T. M. Shaw: The Political-Economy of Zambia, in Current History, vol. 81, no. 471, 1982, p. 126.

⁴¹ J.K Nyerere: Nyerere on Socialism. Oxford University Press, Dar-es-Salaam, 1969, pp. 3-58.

⁴² *Ibid.* pp. 3-58; P Esterhuysen: Africa A-Z, Continental and Country Profiles, p. 343.

⁴³ H.H Patel: 'The SADCC states, the international environment and change in South Africa', in G.

partyism and prospects for political pluralism, given the developments in Eastern Europe, surfaced in Tanzania during this period.

In both countries a threat of domestic instability loomed due to a combination of economic and political factors outlined above. Internal political dissatisfaction was caused by the intolerance of the ruling parties to political pluralism. Nonetheless, the two countries never relented in their commitment and support for the liberation movements in Southern Africa. Hence, both Zambia and Tanzania, until 1990, continued to provide a haven for the ANC, PAC, BCM and other elements of the liberation movement.⁴⁴

The BLS States – Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland

The three former British territories obtained independence in the 1960s with Botswana and Lesotho in September and October 1966, respectively, and Swaziland in 1968. From the outset the three new independent states had to deal with the reality of dependence on South Africa. Sir Seretse Khama, the new Prime Minister of Botswana said at his inaugural ceremony,

We fully appreciate that it is wholly in our interests to preserve neighbourly relations with the Republic of South Africa. Our economic links with South Africa are virtually indissoluble. We are tied directly to South Africa – communications, for markets, for our beef, for labour in the mines, and in many other respects.⁴⁵

This utterance was echoed by Leabua Jonathan at Lesotho's independence celebrations in October 1966. He emphasized the importance of peaceful co-existence between South Africa and Lesotho because Lesotho could not grow and prosper in isolation. When Swaziland obtained her independence in September 1968, Sukuti, the Deputy Prime Minister remarked that "South Africa is most important to us and we realize that without its help and co-operation we would be in a difficult position – independence or no independence".⁴⁶

Venter was not exaggerating the situation when he asserted that "at the most extreme were the BLS states which, as members of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), were firmly integrated into South Africa's trading orbit".⁴⁷ All the BLS states had eco-

Maasdorp and A. Whiteside (eds.): *Towards a Post Apartheid Future, Political and Economic Relations in Southern Africa*. Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1992, p. 51.

⁴⁴ H.H. Patel: 'The SADCC states, the international environment and change in South Africa', p. 51.

⁴⁵ G.M. Cockram: *Vorster's Foreign Policy*, p. 124.

⁴⁶ G.M. Cockram: *Vorster's Foreign Policy*, p. 129; S.C. Nolutshungu: *South Africa in Africa: A Study of Ideology and Foreign Policy*. Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1975, p. 138.

⁴⁷ D. Venter: *South Africa and the Comity of Nations*, p. 11.

conomic links with South Africa and were heavily dependent on these links since their internal resources were underdeveloped. They were merely exporters of raw material and labour to Europe and South Africa. This continued unabated after independence. By 1984 each one of the BLS countries ran a trade deficit in excess of US\$100 million with South Africa.⁴⁸

The position of the BLS countries was exacerbated by the fact that geographically they are land-locked and have no useable port and harbour facilities, hence their dependence on South Africa for both ports and efficiently run railways. In addition, they also depended on South Africa for the employment of the majority of their labour force. It was estimated that in 1984 Lesotho had 140 000, Swaziland 20 000 and Botswana 25 000 of their labour force working in South Africa.⁴⁹ In 1984, it was estimated that the remittances from Lesotho migrant workers “amounted to M507 million as compared to a gross domestic product (GDP) of M401 million in Lesotho”.⁵⁰ In other words, besides the economic dependence perpetuated by the sabotage and military raids by the South African defence force in the mid 1980s, the BLS countries already had a history of dependence on South Africa. As a result of these circumstances, these countries were less overt in the condemnation of South Africa among the Frontline States.

It was readily accepted by all parties in Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland prior to independence that they would have to play a very minor role in the Pan-African campaign of coercing South Africa to abandon apartheid by isolation, boycotts and even violence. Experience had also clearly indicated, in the run-up to independence, that South Africa would never allow them to harbour people suspected of revolutionary political activities in South Africa.⁵¹

Therefore, the relations between the BLS countries and South Africa represented a delicate balance reflecting the fact that geography and economic dependency made any confrontational stance unviable. Even though they supported the liberation movement and were members of SADCC and the Frontline States, they never allowed liberation movements such as the ANC and the PAC to establish military bases in their countries or to use their territory as an infiltration corridor into South Africa. At a Lusaka meeting of non-aligned states, Seretse Khama of Botswana underscored this when he emphasised that “there is a limit beyond which our contributions cannot go without endangering

⁴⁸ World Bank: World Bank Report, Oxford University Press, 1981, p. 78; also D. Venter: South Africa and the Comity of Nations, p. 11.

⁴⁹ D. Venter: South Africa and the Comity of Nations, p. 12.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* p. 12.

⁵¹ S.C. Nolutshungu: South Africa in Africa, p. 136; T.M. Callaghy: South Africa in Southern Africa, p. 357.

our very independence".⁵² Botswana alone insisted that she would accommodate only refugees recognised in terms of the country's law and international law whether South Africa agreed with it or not. The other two countries, Lesotho and Swaziland, followed suit and as a result, the ANC and the PAC were not allowed to maintain guerrilla camps in these countries. Political refugees escaping South Africa's police networks had to leave the BLS countries, especially after the 1985 SADF raid into Maseru, the capital of Lesotho. Despite this situation, members of the liberation movement still enjoyed support in the BLS countries because these countries were fully supportive of the struggles against colonialism and racism.

Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe

The two Portuguese territories were liberated in 1975 and 1976 respectively whereas Zimbabwe was liberated in 1980. The three countries obtained more than half of their imports from South Africa. Besides this, South Africa had invested in the physical infrastructure in these countries, e.g. the Cahora Bassa scheme in Mozambique and the Ruacana hydro-electric scheme in Angola.⁵³ Zimbabwe's labour force employed in South Africa in 1984 was estimated at 7000 and the Mozambican labour force totalled 60 000.⁵⁴ Zimbabwe had to reconcile her rejection of Apartheid South Africa with the realities of pragmatic economics. South Africa was Zimbabwe's largest trading partner and in 1980, over half of Zimbabwe's total capital stock was foreign owned, with South African interests holding about 25 per cent.⁵⁵ By late 1987 almost 90 per cent of Zimbabwe's external trade and fuel supplies depended on South African transportation networks.⁵⁶ This level of dependence on South Africa was exposed in 1987 when South Africa imposed selective oil and trade embargoes as a retaliatory move against Zimbabwe for her involvement in the economic sanctions campaign against South Africa. Zimbabwe was forced to extend a preferential trade agreement between South Africa and Zimbabwe and open a trade mission in Johannesburg in 1987.⁵⁷

Angola was the only one of the three countries without clear and stable economic links

⁵² J. Halpern: 'Botswana' in *Africa South of the Sahara*, 1979-1980. Europa Publication, London, 1980, p. 185.

⁵³ D. Venter: *South Africa and the African Comity of Nations*, p. 11.

⁵⁴ D. Venter: *South Africa and the African Comity of Nations*, p. 12.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* p. 11.

⁵⁶ E. Leistner: 'South Africa and Zimbabwe: Time for a rethink', in *Africa Institute Bulletin*, Vol. 27, No. 4, 1987, p. 62.

⁵⁷ D. Venter: *South Africa and the African Comity of Nations*, p. 23.

with South Africa because of the state of war in the country during this period. Similar to Mozambique, which was affected by war against the South African sponsored RENAMO, Angola did not have peace since independence because of the civil war between UNITA and the MPLA government. “Nevertheless, Angola provided five military training camps to the ANC”.⁵⁸ The question of the hosting of liberation movements had to be reconsidered following the peace agreements Angola signed with South Africa in order to end the involvement of outside forces in that country. The first one of these agreements was the 1984 Lusaka Accord, which committed both South Africa and Angola to a ceasefire agreement and withdrawal of South African troops from Angola. In 1988 another agreement was signed between Angola, Cuba and South Africa in New York. This paved the way for the final withdrawal of South African troops and the finalisation of talks for the independence of Namibia. This had serious implications for the presence of ANC guerrilla forces in Angola. These were expelled from the country in 1989.

During the same period developments in Mozambique were also unfavourable to the liberation movements, particularly to the ANC and to a lesser extent the PAC (which had no camps in Mozambique but used the country for transit purposes into South Africa). Since independence Mozambique suffered repeated military attacks from RENAMO. From 1980 RENAMO received support from South Africa. The impact of the attacks was so profound that the country was pulverized into a condition of famine and destruction. As a result of these conditions Mozambique entered into a non-aggression pact called the Nkomati Accord, designed to halt SADF support for RENAMO in exchange for Mozambique denying military bases to the ANC.⁵⁹ This represented a major setback for the liberation movement because ANC military operations were terminated and its cadres flown out of Mozambique as a sign of commitment by the Mozambican government to the signed peace accord. The Nkomati Accord failed because of the covert operations by South African military intelligence which continued even after the signing of the agreement. This is covered in the sections below.

⁵⁸ H. H. Patel: “The SADCC states, the International Environment and Change in South Africa”, in G. Maasdorp and A. Whiteside (eds.) : Towards a Post-Apartheid Future. Macmillan, London, 1992, p. 52.

⁵⁹ G. Mills and S. Baynham: Changing the Guard: South African Foreign Policy into the 1990s, in Africa Insight, Vol. 20, No. 3, 1990, p. 183; Also see D. Venter: South Africa and the African Comity of Nations, p. 26.

The South African offensive in Southern Africa

During the period 1960–1990, South Africa was at the centre of the conflict in Southern Africa. This can be attributed to her military and economic power. The lack of political will from major Western powers to support the liberation movements in Southern Africa due to their anti-communist ideological orientation, tipped the balance of forces in the conflict in South Africa's favour. South Africa adjusted her strategy regularly, but nevertheless displayed some elements of continuity during the following periods 1961–1975 and 1977 to 1990. The initial period was characterised by “assertive incorporation” and dialogue whereas the latter was dominated by the “carrot and a stick” approach in dealing with independent neighbouring Southern African states.⁶⁰ During the period 1961–1975, South Africa tried to incorporate her neighbouring states into a South Africa dominated economic union, “a constellation of states”, hoping that more economic co-operation and dependent political co-existence with South Africa could be forged.⁶¹ When this failed, South Africa had to embark on a multilateral strategy characterised by economic and technological support for co-operating governments and military attacks on those states suspected of harbouring ANC and PAC militants. After 1976, following the independence of Mozambique, the geo-political and security situation changed and South Africa felt more vulnerable to the perceived communist onslaught from the north. Hence South Africa's new “forward defence” strategy which involved military attacks across international borders against ANC camps, individuals and groups located within neighbouring states.⁶² It involved attempts to diminish the hostility of the neighbours by offering economic support, while seeking to destabilise the regimes by means of economic and military pressure.⁶³

The cross-border raids by South Africa, ostensibly targeted at ANC and PAC exiles, had a negative effect on most states in Southern Africa. As Venter puts it, “first, given the economic situation of most states in Southern Africa, the diversion of scarce resources to military uses jeopardised, if not devastated, all efforts at economic development. Secondly, it also exacted a heavy political toll within those states by revealing them as defenceless in the face of foreign military attack and as unable to protect their own citizens. Pretoria's anti-ANC raids had the effect of undermining the credibility of Black African

⁶⁰ A. du Pisani: *South Africa and SADCC: Into the 1990*, in G. Maasdorp and A. Whiteside: *Towards a Post-Apartheid Future; Political and Economic Relations in Southern Africa*. Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1992, p. 175.

⁶¹ D. Venter: *South Africa and the African Comity of Nations*, pp. 1–72; L. Kapungu: *Southern Africa and the role of SADCC*, pp. 43–51.

⁶² D. Venter: *South Africa and the African Comity of Nations*, p. 19.

⁶³ C. Legum (ed.): *Africa Contemporary Record, 1981–1982*, p. A10.

governments”.⁶⁴ This characterised the destabilisation and aggravated the economic problems of independent African states in Southern Africa.

The “carrot and stick” approach affected Southern African states in various ways. Mozambique was supported by South Africa through the use of its under-utilised railways and ports. Zimbabwe borrowed locomotives for its railways and used outlets to the sea provided for her exports. The Customs Union with the BLS was maintained. To reduce the cycle of dependence on South Africa, the Frontline States responded by forming the SADCC in 1980, which included the BLS states, Angola, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Zambia and later Namibia in 1990. This created the potential to remove the attraction of the “carrot” as more interdependence among the SADCC countries could potentially reduce their dependence on South Africa. The South African government thus stepped up its counter activities in the 1980s: the loaned locomotives to Zimbabwe were withdrawn. The Resistencia Nacional Mocambicana (RENAMO), an opposition movement to the FRELIMO government, was allowed to have its headquarters in the Northern Transvaal. Its clandestine “freedom radio” was operated from South Africa and the government’s military intelligence cooperated closely with RENAMO.⁶⁵ As a result, during the 1980s subversive activities by RENAMO, escalated inside Mozambique. In the case of Zimbabwe, South Africa maintained a training camp in the Northern Transvaal for former supporters of Bishop Muzorewa, (an opponent of Mugabe’s government) and members of Rhodesia’s Selous Scouts (a counter-insurgency military group which supported Ian Smith in the war against ZANU and ZAPU).⁶⁶

The period, 1961 to 1976, was characterised by South Africa’s attempts to break from isolation in order to play a “constructive” role in Africa. Hence, the South African Prime Minister, John Vorster’s slogan, was “friendly co-existence and co-operation with countries of Africa”.⁶⁷ The détente period could not be sustained for much longer. The involvement of the South African defence force in Angola ended any prospects of enduring co-operation between South Africa and the Frontline States. The domestic events in South Africa, which followed the Soweto student uprisings in June 1976, the death in detention of the Black Consciousness leader Steve Biko and the introduction of strict internal security measures to quell the volatile situation, marked the end of détente and the ushering in of a new approach.

From 1978 P.W. Botha’s presidency ushered in a new approach to the Southern Af-

⁶⁴ D. Venter: South Africa and the African Comity of Nations, pp. 19–20.

⁶⁵ C. Legum: Africa Contemporary Record, 1981–1982, Africana Publishing Company, New York, 1983. pp. A11–A12.

⁶⁶ C. Legum: Africa Contemporary Record, 1981–1982 p. A12.

⁶⁷ O. Geyser: Détente Southern Africa, Institute for Contemporary History, Bloemfontein, 1976. p. 30.

rican conflict. He continued with the idea of economic co-operation inherited from his predecessor, B.J. Vorster, via the constellation of Southern African States (the idea of the Commonwealth of Southern African states was started with Verwoerd in the 1960s), but his priority was the military defence of South Africa against every possible external interference. His first priority was to set up the State Security Council (SCC which later became BOSS), which, in effect, became the locus of foreign policy making and execution.⁶⁸ The attempts to enhance South Africa's hegemonic position through the constellation of states failed because the idea of a constellation of states led by South Africa was rejected by the BLS states and the formation of SADCC posed a direct alternative for them. South Africa was therefore left with the hard interventionist component of its policy during the 1980s. Joseph Hanlon summarised the aggressive initiatives of South Africa during this period when he enunciated the following incidents:

- “The hit and run strikes of three capitals (Lesotho, Botswana, Mozambique) and four other countries, (Angola, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Zambia);
- Attempts to assassinate two Prime Ministers (Lesotho and Zimbabwe);
- Backing of dissident groups that have brought chaos to two countries (Angola and Mozambique) and less serious disorder in two others (Lesotho and Zimbabwe);
- Disruption of the oil supplies of six countries (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe) and;
- Attacking the railways providing the normal import and export routes of seven countries (Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe)”.⁶⁹

This situation impacted negatively on the liberation movements. This led to even more clandestine operations. Botswana and Swaziland, for example, became firm in refusing to allow any facilities to armed guerrillas. Nevertheless, their willingness to admit political exiles from S.A. to take sanctuary in their countries made clandestine operations possible.⁷⁰ To the liberation movements this meant that they had no safe haven in most Southern African countries, (except in Tanzania), and had to be even more vigilant because of the possibility that the enemy might be among them.

⁶⁸ K. van Wyk: Foreign Policy Orientations of the PW Botha Regime: Changing Perceptions of State Elites in South Africa, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1991, pp. 45–46; D. Venter: *South Africa and the African Comity of Nations*, p. 7.

⁶⁹ J. Hanlon: *Beggar Your Neighbours*, p. 1.

⁷⁰ C. Legum: *Africa Contemporary Record*, p. A9.

Superpowers and the conflict in Southern Africa

An understanding of the role of the superpowers (the US, the USSR, the People's Republic of China), is important for an assessment of extra-regional factors "especially the interests and activities of dominant global actors such as major states and corporations affecting intra-regional relations and vice versa".⁷¹ This dialectical relationship shaped and conditioned the exile environment and eventually moulded the experiences of exile liberation movements in Southern Africa. The role performed by superpowers, as a point of interaction with Southern Africa remains an aspect of Southern African political history which is ambiguous, inconsistent and sometimes difficult to comprehend. The involvement of superpowers was largely determined by the ideological dispositions of their ruling parties and the perceived threat to their interests in Southern Africa. When the Republican Party under Ronald Reagan was in power in the United States of America, a new commitment to Southern Africa, different from that of the Democratic Party, was implemented. The policy of constructive engagement, which meant that the US supported UNITA rebels against the MPLA government and adopted a non-confrontational attitude towards South Africa, as opposed to the OAU's attempts to isolate South Africa, was implemented. These policies were favourably received by the National Party government. This approach was later modified by the Reagan administration taking into account the realities of advancing independence and majority rule throughout the region. The attitude to Southern Africa changed once again under the leadership of the Democrats in the US.

From the early 1960s, the superpowers played an important role in the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. Before the PAC was banned in April 1960, two of its leaders, Nana Mahomo and Peter Molosti, were sent to the USA to influence and mobilise political opinion and support and to raise funds in order to establish the PAC external mission.⁷² The same was done by the ANC when O.R. Tambo was sent abroad to establish the ANC's external diplomatic mission and raise funds for the organisation. Both organisations approached the USA and Western European countries as well as the Soviet Union, (in the case of the ANC), while the PAC approached China. The superpowers were individually involved in various ways in the Southern African liberation struggle. Some gave financial support, initially to finance the logistics of ANC and PAC exiles in Tanzania and Zambia. During the initial phase, 1961–1975, the support came largely from non-governmental organisations and other elements of civil society which support-

⁷¹ T.M. Shaw: *South Africa, Southern Africa and the World System*, in T.M. Shaw and KA Heard (eds.), *Cooperation and Conflict in Southern Africa*, University Press of America, Washington, 1977. p. 46.

⁷² T. Lodge: *Black politics in South Africa since 1945*; Interview with M. Gqobose, Port Elizabeth, 28 July 1996.

ed the Anti-Apartheid movement and not from governments. The role of governments became prominent as from 1976.

Support from non-governmental organisations was not unconditional. Conditions set by these organisations tended to superimpose ideological cleavages, for example, Soviet-American, Sino-Soviet and Arab-Israeli splits, which reinforced internecine rivalries among liberation movements.⁷³ The Soviet-sponsored liberation movements tended to be political allies, e.g. ANC, SWAPO, ZAPU and FRELIMO; on the other hand, the Chinese-sponsored movements were also allies e.g. ZANU, PAC, UNITA. Unfortunately, it is not within the scope of this book to cover this important aspect, the nature of alliances, among liberation movements.

Until 1976, the superpowers only exercised an indirect, albeit significant political influence on the developments in Southern Africa. As far back as 1964, the USA, Britain and France vetoed attempts to oust South Africa from the United Nations. Again in 1975, the same countries exercised their veto rights in the UN Security Council in order to prevent an arms boycott against South Africa.⁷⁴ Even though relations with South Africa were certainly “undesirable” to some superpowers at the level of intergovernmental relations, at the level of transnational interactions, South Africa was still recognised and well integrated into the global system. “Corporate links, gold sales, diamond trading and uranium production are all salient aspects of this external orientation and incorporation”.⁷⁵ This relationship changed in the late 1970s and especially in the 1980s. The independence of Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe, not only changed the balance of political forces in Southern Africa, but convinced the USA and Britain about the importance of negotiated majority rule as a solution to the South African and Namibian situations.

The war in Angola led to direct superpower involvement in the conflict in Southern Africa. The Angolan war resulted in the shaping of alliances and threatened to internationalise the Southern African conflict. South Africa, the USA, Britain and France supported UNITA - (National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola) led by Jonas Savimbi. The aim was to overthrow the MPLA- (People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola) led socialist government. Besides that, the rich mineral resources of Angola concerned the American government. The Soviet Block and Cuban troops intervened on the side of the MPLA, and China supported the FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola). The FNLA, led by Holden Roberto, was the only liberation movement of Angola recognised by the OAU on grounds of it being the most active. This view was maintained until

⁷³ J. Marcum: ‘Exile Conditions and Revolutionary Effectiveness’ in *Southern Africa in Perspective*, p. 222; the point is also made by D.A.B. Mahlangu: “From South Africa to Azania”, p. 51.

⁷⁴ O. Geyser: *Détente Southern Africa*, p. 28.

⁷⁵ T.M. Shaw: *South Africa, Southern Africa and the World System*, pp. 49–50.

1971.⁷⁶ The war which ensued during the period 1975 to 1976 in Angola, was among the bloodiest wars, following the Biafran war and Algerian war, (1954–1962) on the continent of Africa. ANC guerrillas of the ANC found themselves directly involved in the war in support of the MPLA, whereas the PAC, in line with its alliance with China, supported UNITA. The unfortunate choice of alliances during the Angolan war created grounds for mistrust among members of the liberation movements.⁷⁷ The ANC, for instance, alleged that the exiled PAC of South Africa worked hand-in-glove with the CIA (United States Central Intelligence Agency) and the National Party government.⁷⁸ It added to the hostile perceptions and poor relations already existing between the PAC and the ANC in exile.

The defeat of UNITA and FLNA by the MPLA resulted in talks leading to a peace settlement at the end of 1976. These talks paved the way for the negotiation of a settlement on the Namibian question. The Botha led South African government subsequently accepted proposals for a settlement in 1982. From this period on the attitudes of the superpowers towards liberation movements in Southern Africa improved. The President of the ANC, O.R. Tambo, visited the White House for the first time to discuss a solution to the South African problem. This marked the beginning of recognition of South African liberation movements by the superpowers (especially the USA and Western Europe) as partners in the process of finding a solution to the South African problem. From 1982, the same negotiations were started with the leaders of SWAPO of Namibia. Even though they recognised the role of exile liberation movements, the superpowers continued to renounce violence as a strategy towards a solution.

The “experience” of liberation movements

The common experience of exile liberation movements in Southern Africa across the time span dealt with in this chapter, was that of pervasive insecurity, competition for limited resources and recognition as “the most logical alternatives to existing regimes they sought to overthrow”, interference by the OAU and intra-organisational disunity.⁷⁹

The unusually precarious exile environment was in some ways a political rite of passage for liberation movements, from “boyhood” to “manhood”, as it separated the politically astute and stable organisations from those that were not. Lodge describes the exile experience as “a rite of passage which could corrode the internal integrity of the nationalist and revolutionary organisation”.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ P. Stiff: *The Silent War*, p. 97.

⁷⁷ T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, pp. 316–317.

⁷⁸ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: The Pan Africanist Congress: Whom does it serve? no date.

⁷⁹ D.A.B. Mahlangu: “From South Africa to Azania”, p. 49.

⁸⁰ T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 296.

This section will outline the experiences of liberation movements such as SWAPO, the ANC, ZANU, FRELIMO and the MPLA, in order to reveal common areas of experience referred to above. The exile experience of the PAC will be examined in the following chapters in greater depth.

The problems and difficulties confronting all liberation movements in Southern Africa involved the following: maintaining and sustaining organisational coherence and unity, keeping of sound relations with the government of the host country, (i.e. its allies and its native inhabitants), maintaining good relations with all sources of funding and remaining politically effective in terms of programs and activities inside the country to be liberated as well as outside of it. This was a difficult task. The more active the liberation movement became inside its country of origin, the more problems it invited for the host countries and the greater the likelihood that its facilities would be closed inside the host countries because of threats and pressure from South Africa. The more inactive a liberation movement was, the more pressure was exercised by the OAU Liberation Committee and the greater the chances that funding would be terminated and possible de-recognition as a liberation movement was also a possibility. This was the predicament of liberation movements during this period.

Between 1960 and the early 1970s, reactivating internal political activity on the part of liberation movements was very difficult. In the case of the South African liberation movements (the ANC and PAC), the problem was that South Africa was “protected by a cordon sanitaire of colonial territories themselves engaged in extensive counter-insurgent operations. Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland, though all independent states by the end of 1968, were nevertheless economically reliant on South Africa to provide secure bases for exile South African organisations”.⁸¹ This was worsened by the fact that only small areas of South Africa lent themselves to the classical African pattern of rural-based, bush warfare waged by guerrillas.⁸² “In the absence of rewarding mobilisation activity” as Lodge puts it, “political energy could focus itself around hair splitting doctrinal disputes. Removed from the arena of real conflict, internal dissent and opposition to factions and personalities within the movement could serve as a substitute for externally-oriented aggression”.⁸³

SWAPO experienced the exact problems indicated by Lodge during its exile period from 1966 to 1990. SWAPO had camps in Zambia, Tanzania and Angola. Internal conflict within SWAPO, which had been simmering for a long time, surfaced in 1968, 1974 and in the 1980s. “The major crises included the Kongwa crisis of 1968, the 1974 re-

⁸¹ T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 295.

⁸² H. Barrell: *The Outlawed South African Liberation Movements*, p. 52.

⁸³ T. Lodge: *Black politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 296.

bellion, and the spy drama of the 1980s. The Kongwa and 1976 crises were suppressed with the help of host states”.⁸⁴ The conflict of 1976 erupted between the SWAPO Youth League and the leadership of SWAPO. Sam Nujoma, the President of SWAPO and the leadership of the organisation were accused of “corruption and incompetence”.⁸⁵ The youth were also frustrated because the leadership would not release them to wage guerrilla attacks inside Namibia. The leadership insisted on a planned guerrilla strategy which, at that stage, was not well understood by the youth. Early in 1976, the dissidents, mainly from the SWAPO Youth League (which enjoyed the support of the army called PLAN), took over SWAPO’s central base in Zambia. The guerrilla army of SWAPO assisted the dissidents. OAU officials in Zambia intervened. The Zambian defence force was deployed to quell the uprising and members of the dissident group were detained.⁸⁶

Besides this incident, during the first period of its existence in exile, 1966 to 1968, SWAPO was troubled by divisions on the question of strategy to be followed by the liberation movement, i.e. whether the armed struggle was the right approach or not. This resulted in the emergence of factions along ideological lines (moderates versus radicals) within the same organisation. From 1974 to 1990 the organisation had to clean itself from within its ranks by removing South African agents who took advantage of internal divisions and infiltrated the army and membership in the late 1960s.⁸⁷ This explains the large number of people expelled from the organisation. In the case of SWAPO, the internal enemy syndrome was not as pervasive as in the case of the ANC and PAC of South Africa and therefore the clean-up campaign was short-lived. The organisation did not sustain any further divisions.

FRELIMO of Mozambique had similar experiences. As Newitt puts it, “FRELIMO was deeply divided, splits were appearing every month and ethnic hostility to FRELIMO seemed to have been aroused in various parts of the country”.⁸⁸ FRELIMO was rocked by internal divisions as early as 1964. Initially the divisions were about strategy in the armed struggle. “Few believed in low-intensity war and prolonged guerrilla campaign”.⁸⁹ In 1965 defectors from FRELIMO formed a rival organisation called COREMO. It was militarily active for a short period until 1971 but remained an alternative focus of nationalist sentiment throughout the exile period. Ideological and ethnic tensions ex-

⁸⁴ S. Fikeni: *Exile and Return: The Politics of Namibia’s “Returnees”*, p. 3.

⁸⁵ D. Herberstein and J. Evenson: *The Devils are Among Us: The War for Namibia*, Zed Press, London, 1989, p. 56.

⁸⁶ D. Herberstein and J. Evenson: *The Devils are Among Us: The War for Namibia*.

⁸⁷ V. Randolph: ‘SWAPO of Namibia: A Movement in Exile’, in *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 85–107.

⁸⁸ M. Newitt: *History of Mozambique*, p. 525.

⁸⁹ M. Newitt: *History of Mozambique*, p.523.

ploded in 1968–1969. These were resolved with some intervention by the host countries. Certain individuals were expelled from the organisation, e.g. Nkavandame, a member of the executive committee of FRELIMO, was stripped of his party membership and later defected to the Portuguese in 1969.⁹⁰ Again in 1969, after the death of Eduardo Mondlane, FRELIMO was embroiled in a leadership struggle. A triumvirate headed by Joaquim Chissano, later President of Mozambique, was elected to lead the organisation until the appointment of Samora Machel as President of the organisation in 1971. He led the organisation until liberation in 1975. Infiltration by the Portuguese was another problem for FRELIMO in the 1970s, but under the leadership of Machel, the organisation was able to emerge strong, united and successful.

In the case of the MPLA of Angola the situation was similar, the level of internal conflict, however, was deeper. This became explicit between June 1974 and 1975. The MPLA was formed in 1956 and since their 1961 uprising inside Angola, the organisation had limited military success. The organisation was torn apart by leadership divisions.⁹¹ It was under pressure to unite with the FNLA, which the OAU recognised on the grounds of its military activities inside Angola. In 1973, the Soviet Union also suspended its military aid to the MPLA as a strategy to pressurise the leadership of the organisation to sort out the internal problems. The period from June 1974 to January 1975 was the worst for the MPLA. “It had split into three factions, each with its own charismatic leader. There was “Agostinho Neto’s True MPLA, Daniel Chipenda’s Easter Rebellion Group MPLA and Mario de Andrade’s Active Rebellion Group”.”⁹² Again leaders of the OAU, i.e. Tanzania and Zambia, intervened and pressurised the MPLA to resolve its problems. This happened eventually in 1975. The resolution of the internal problems paved the way for the resumption of military aid from the Soviet Union from August 1975. With the renewed support of the Soviet Union and the intervention of Cuban instructors, the MPLA was able to successfully wage the war against its competitors, the FNLA (China backed), UNITA (South Africa, USA and Western Europe supported) and finally introduced the first MPLA-led independent government of Angola in 1976.

The situation of liberation movements during the Rhodesian war was slightly different. Two major liberation movements were active in the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe. These were ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People’s Union), formed in 1961 and ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union), formed on the 8th of August 1963, by ZAPU members who were dissatisfied with the leadership of Joshua Nkomo, the presi-

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 525.

⁹¹ P. Stiff: *The Silent War*, p. 97.

⁹² *Ibid.* p. 100.

dent of ZAPU. Both organisations had camps in Zambia, Tanzania and later in Mozambique. After the guerrilla attacks against Rhodesia on the 28th April 1966, ZANU became more widely known inside and outside Zimbabwe. On the 28th of April 1966, seven members of ZANLA (the military wing of ZANU), died in action against the Rhodesian forces. The day is still commemorated in Zimbabwe as the Chimurenga Day, the beginning of the armed struggle against the Rhodesian forces.⁹³ Since that date ZANU was at the forefront of the military struggle against the Rhodesians. As an organisation ZANU had its own internal problems. These started in 1974 and worsened in 1975 after the assassination of ZANU president, Herbert Chitepo, in Lusaka, Zambia. In 1974 the Rhodesian government was persuaded by Kaunda of Zambia, and Vorster of South Africa, as part of the détente scenario to enter into negotiations with the leaders of ZAPU, Joshua Nkomo, David Chikerama and church leaders such as Bishop Abel Muzorewa and Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole. Ian Smith released all political prisoners, revoked death sentences imposed on guerrillas and lifted the ban on ZANU and ZAPU.⁹⁴ The Frontline States intervened in December 1974. They influenced Zimbabwean political movements to forge unity amongst themselves. An umbrella body for all Zimbabwean nationalist movements was formed in exile - the African Nationalist Council with its president, Bishop Abel Muzorewa. "To strengthen the Council's position, the Dar-es-Salaam based OAU Liberation Committee withdrew its support for ZANU and ZAPU".⁹⁵

These developments precipitated internal divisions within ZANU on issues of strategy and the way forward. ZANU was left without a leader and was run by a committee until 1976 when Robert Mugabe, an ex-political prisoner, was unanimously elected as the leader of ZANU. Mugabe's decisive leadership gave a fresh turn to the events. He united his party, rejected the leadership of Muzorewa, convinced the Frontline States that Smith was never genuinely interested in majority rule in Zimbabwe and renewed the attacks against the Rhodesians from three fronts: Tete, Manica and Gaza.⁹⁶ ZANU was supported by China in their new military offensive. They infiltrated the villages and used spirit mediums as a source of support and popular mobilisation. At a Commonwealth summit held in Lusaka in 1979, Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister of Britain, agreed to host a constitutional conference which paved the way for ZANU success in British supervised elections.⁹⁷

The ANC of South Africa experienced serious problems during the exile period. Un-

⁹³ D. Martin, and P. Johnson: *The struggle for Zimbabwe*, p. xv.

⁹⁴ G.M. Khadigala: *Allies in Adversity*, p. 29; D. Martin and P. Johnson: *The struggle for Zimbabwe*, p. xvii.

⁹⁵ D. Martin and P. Johnson: *The struggle for Zimbabwe*, p. 28; *Times of Zambia*, 9, December, 1974.

⁹⁶ D. Martin and P. Johnson: *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, p. xvii.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.xvii

like the PAC, whose legal existence was short-lived inside South Africa, the ANC (the oldest liberation movement in Southern Africa) before it was banned, had developed internal systems which made it possible to withstand the challenges of exile. The movement had “self-consciously constructed a broad ‘national liberation alliance’, uniting different ideological tendencies within its ranks around two main lodestars, the Freedom Charter and Strategy and Tactics”.⁹⁸ In anticipation of being banned, the ANC had dispatched Oliver Tambo, its deputy President, to London. “He was a good choice, a skillful negotiator and strong personality, who, like Nelson Mandela, had managed to avoid being strongly identified with either the Communist left or the radical Africanists”.⁹⁹ Oliver Tambo, Tennyson Makiwane, Yusuf Dadoo and later Moses Kotane and Duma Nokwe, all laid the foundation for sound networks even before the ANC went into exile in 1960. The exiled ANC established its headquarters in Morogoro, Tanzania. ANC guerrilla camps were spread in Tanzania in the following areas, Kongwa, Mbeya, Bagamoyo and Morogoro¹⁰⁰. The first incident in which ANC guerrillas were deployed in a military campaign was in 1967 in the now infamous Wankie battle. A number of ZAPU and ANC guerrillas, as well as Rhodesian soldiers, were killed. Both sides claimed victory but neither of the claims has been verified till today. In the internal conflict that occurred in the ANC in 1968, some members of Umkhonto we Sizwe (ANC’s military wing) complained about the Wankie battle. They claimed that it was an instance of miscalculation on the part of the leadership of the ANC. In 1968, the Umkhonto defectors also alleged that there was widespread dissatisfaction within the camps. They accused their commanders of extravagant living and ethnic favouritism.¹⁰¹ These and other complaints led to the summoning of the Morogoro Consultative Conference. At this conference the ANC leadership admitted its mistakes and resigned en masse, only to be reconstituted in the light of the recommendations of the conference. Numerous internal reforms were made and a Code of Conduct and Oath of Allegiance were formulated as recommendations of the conference.¹⁰² The Morogoro conference revived confidence in the leadership of the organisation and helped restore a degree of unity. This did not put an end to internal conflicts. In 1975 another group led by Tennyson Makiwane was expelled from the organisation. The Makiwane group was concerned about the role of white communists in the ANC. The dissident group, led by Makiwane, argued that “the SACP white leadership

⁹⁸ H. Barrell: *The Outlawed South African Liberation Movements*, p. 55; *ANC Speaks: Documents and Statements of the ANC*, Lusaka, 1985.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* 55.

¹⁰⁰ T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 298.

¹⁰¹ T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 300.

¹⁰² *Ibid.* p.300.

who opposed the political philosophy embodied in the concept of African nationalism and who oppose the African image of the ANC reflect their social and class roots as petit-bourgeois white – roots firmly fixed in the historically-conditioned modes of thought that characterize white superior attitudes towards Blacks in South Africa”.¹⁰³

The impact of the two breakaways that occurred, firstly, in 1959 (PAC split), and later in 1975, and the bitter internal conflicts which occurred after 1969, following the consultative conference in Tanzania, were resolved internally by the organisation. “The relative maturity of the ANC leadership – both in prison and in exile – was a major factor contributing to its survival during these crises. Throughout these bitter conflicts the ANC was able to retain a degree of continuity and bedrock political unity – to such a degree that it was the envy of a number of liberation movements elsewhere. Within its own structure, the ANC tended to concentrate on the mechanics of organisation and specialisation in its ranks. Diplomatically, it sought international support from governments which opposed apartheid, whether ‘capitalist’ or ‘socialist’ and attempted to avoid being “instrumentalised in East-West power struggles”.¹⁰⁴

In summary, even though this chapter does not provide the details about the impact of exile experience on the functioning of liberation movements, it extrapolates from the vast information and generalizations informing the exile experiences of the PAC. The key issues which emerge from the discussion are that the situation in exile was precarious and it affected liberation movements differently. They coped in various ways. Some emerged weak others came out stronger because of determined and skilful leadership and the ability to manipulate the exile environment in favour of the organisation. One can not blame it all on exile conditions as that would absolve the organisations of responsibility for what happened to them. Internal divisions, ethnic conflicts, divisions between the political elites and rank-and-file members, limited resources and outside interference, were problems with which all liberation movements had to deal. The exile experiences of other liberation movements, e.g. FRELIMO, ZANU and SWAPO, confirm the fact that internal divisions within liberation organisations were common. These needed a respected leadership and clear organisational systems to be resolved. The following chapters will analyse, in detail, how the PAC dealt with these problems and the impact they had on the organisation as a whole during the period 1960 to 1990.

¹⁰³ T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p 303.

¹⁰⁴ H. Barrell: *The Outlawed South African Liberation Movements*, pp. 55–56.

5 The Reconstitution of the PAC as a Liberation Movement in Diaspora (1960–1963)

The literature on the reconstitution of the PAC and its re-emergence as a fairly coherent and functioning organisation in exile is limited. The reconstitution of the PAC was a long drawn-out process spanning the period 1960 to 1990. This chapter focuses on the initial period, 1960–1963, which is not covered in existing literature and research. The tendency, in existing literature, is to focus on the weaknesses of the exiled PAC without any reflection on how it was reconstituted as a liberation movement under new and different conditions of exile.¹ This can be explained, partly, by the fact that the initial temporality of exile communities and the clandestine nature of their existence resulted in a situation whereby very little was recorded and kept, even by PAC members themselves, of the experiences of re-forming the PAC in exile. The communities formed by members of the exile liberation organisations were scattered, constantly mobile, unstable and not well organized during the initial period.² This could be explained by the fact that most of the leadership was either in detention or serving jail sentences on Robben Island or in other prisons in South Africa. The political environment in the neighbouring states such as Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana (BLS states) was hostile, given the fact that these states were not independent during the period 1960 to 1962, but were British protectorates. PAC members were loosely scattered in the BLS states, some in Accra, Ghana, in Cairo, Egypt, in the United States of America and in London. The nucleus from which the official PAC organ was born, remained in Maseru, Lesotho, until the end of 1963, when the PAC headquarters was moved to Dar-es-Salaam, in Tanzania. All these factors made it difficult for scholars to study the re-constitution of the PAC during this period. This chapter examines the formation of the PAC as a liberation movement in Lesotho during this under-researched period, as well as reflecting on PAC developments in other parts of the world.

The initial section examines how the first group of PAC exiles established themselves in Maseru before the launch of a formal PAC structure in 1962. It uncovers the details of

¹ To identify these tendencies, see the works by Tom Lodge, 'Revolutionary exile politics, 1960–1975', pp. 296–360 in *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*; Howard Barrel: *The Outlawed South African Liberation Movements*; Stephen M Davis: *Apartheid's Rebels: inside South Africa's Hidden War*.

² Interviews conducted by the author with Elliot Mfafa, 23 July, 1998, Mrs Phama, 24 June 1995, M Gqobose, 29 July 1996 and Mnqojane, 23 June, 1995.

the conditions under which PAC exiles lived in Lesotho and the impact these conditions had on the development of the organisation. The second section examines attempts by the first group of exiles to develop strategy documents for the organisation. These documents, even though very basic in content, were intended to guide the activities of the organisation. The third section examines PAC activities in other parts of the world during the period 1960–1963. Lastly, the chapter examines the formation of the South African United Front, an alliance between the PAC, the ANC, the South African Indian Congress and the South West African National Union (SWANU).

From the outset it should be noted that the attempts to close the gap that exists in the exile history of the PAC, i.e. the period 1960 to 1963, will always be fraught with enormous difficulties. First, the small exile communities formed by PAC members in Lesotho, were characterised by the constant arrival of new members and the departure of old ones.³ This attests to the looseness and discreteness of the PAC exile community during the early stages, making it difficult to discern trends or patterns of the initial development of the organisation. This is exacerbated by the fact that existing research, archival material and literature covering this period, is also fraught with gaps. To uncover critical information on how the Africanists re-formed their organisation under completely different circumstances, the chapter draws from bits and pieces of available archival materials and literature, and relies heavily on oral information. Available oral evidence reveals, though hazily, some of the important issues in this regard. One is acutely aware of the potential weaknesses of oral information in historical research.⁴ Given that oral information is based on memory-derived narratives, the tension between remembering and forgetting may sometimes cast doubt on the epistemological quality of the research findings based on oral evidence. The oral sources and information generated is therefore cross-corroborated amongst several informants and with limited but recognised scholarly works.

The banning of the PAC on April 8 1960 created a number of unforeseen problems for the eleven month-old organisation. Its top leadership was imprisoned and Sobukhwe, the PAC President, was sentenced to three years in prison and his colleagues in the national executive, to two years in prison. Others in the lower echelons of the organisation were given 18 months prison sentences. The only layer of leadership which remained outside custody included people like Nanhah Mahomo and Peter Molotsi, who had left the country on the 20th March 1960, on the instruction that they should mobilise the in-

³ Interviews conducted with Tokoane, Pretoria, 30 October 2002; Elliot Mfafa, Kingwilliams Town, 22 July 1998.

⁴ J Vansina: *Oral Tradition As History*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1965; R. Samuels: Local History and Oral History in *History Workshop Journal*, vol. 1, Spring 1976; B. Nasson: The Oral Historian, in Studies in *The History of Cape Town*, vol. 6, 1988 – illustrate this important point.

ternational community, including the rest of Africa, against Apartheid and also generate resources for the establishment of PAC bases outside South Africa.

As if Sobukhwe knew what was going to happen shortly after the state of emergency was declared and the Pan Africanist Congress banned, he appointed ZB Molete as Acting President. Sobukhwe acted in terms of the Presidential Decree adopted in December 1959.⁵ Even though Z.B. Molete was imprisoned during the period following the banning of the PAC, he was released from prison in August 1960 and this helped to provide a limited degree of leadership inside South Africa whilst the PAC was in exile. He acted as President of the PAC until August 1962.⁶ However, Molete, together with Joe Molefi, left South Africa for Lesotho in 1961, to avoid arrest. The internal underground PAC remained in the hands of Matthew Nkoana until early 1962, when he moved to Botswana where he represented the PAC.⁷ Molete, Mahomo and Molotsi were chosen by Sobukhwe to lead the process towards the re-formation of the PAC outside South Africa. As indicated in the previous section, Mahomo and Molotsi were to raise funds for the creation of the PAC rudimentary infrastructure in Maseru (Lesotho) and set up PAC missions in Accra (Ghana), London (England) and in Cairo (Egypt).⁸ These were not fully-fledged offices with full infrastructure, as would be expected; they operated more as contact points for the PAC in these countries. Different ideological and political tendencies developed in these various offices and there was a dominant tendency of disloyalty towards the centre of authority (in Maseru). This will be examined in depth in the following chapter, when more attention will be given to the generation of conflict within the exiled PAC. Suffice it to say that a perception was created among non-PAC members that “there were different PACs in every part of the world”.⁹

The “official status” of the Maseru PAC was contested. C.L. Lekaje, a PAC official based in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, argued in his submission to the Africa Liberation Committee of the OAU, (made in 1967), that Potlake Leballo (who became Acting President of the official PAC in Lesotho), “unilaterally declared Maseru the headquarters of the PAC. This caused great consternation in the ranks of the PAC”, but given the circumstances of illegality of the PAC in South Africa, and the closeness of Lesotho to South Africa,

⁵ PAC Archives: ‘Background to crucial appointments and policy statement’ 20th June 1964, p. 1.

⁶ T.G. Karis and G.M. Gerhardt (eds.): *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. 5. Nadir and Resurgence, 1964–1979, p. 46; Bernard Leeman: *Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania*, p. 172; Interview with Elliot Mfafa, Kingwilliams Town, 22 July 1998.

⁷ T. Plaatjie: *The PAC in Exile*, p. 703.

⁸ B. Leeman: *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania*, p. 100; Interview with Malcom Dyan by A. Mahlangu, Cape Town, October, 1990.

⁹ Interview with Mazamisa, Cape Town, 1 May 2000.

PAC members had no choice but to join the Maseru group.¹⁰ This was confirmed in an interview with the late Dr Mantshontsho who maintained emphatically that, “it was by chance that Maseru became the headquarters of the PAC in 1962 and it was unfortunate that Leballo grabbed the helms of its leadership”.¹¹ Even though the authority of Maseru as the headquarters and official centre of power was contested, it was widely recognised as the official PAC headquarters. When the headquarters were relocated to Dar-es-Salaam in 1964, Maseru continued to function as a PAC mission. Established research in this field concurs that the first official exile PAC organ was established in Maseru, Lesotho, in 1962.¹²

The Lesotho office of the PAC was officially opened in Bonhomme House in Maseru in 1962 when P.K. Leballo arrived from South Africa, after serving a two-year prison sentence for his role in the anti-pass campaign. Leballo took over from Z.B. Molete as acting President of the exiled PAC.¹³ The point of interest at this stage is what happened before Leballo came to Maseru and what were the processes prior to the official launch of the exile PAC.

As far back as April 1960, individuals and groups of people from South Africa, some ANC members and some PAC members, started trickling into the neighbouring states of Basutoland, Swaziland and Bechuanaland. It was in Maseru, the capital of Lesotho, where a significant presence of PAC membership established itself. They were initially a loose grouping interspersed amongst the native Basotho population who, out of goodwill and sympathy with the political situation of black South Africans, accommodated them. Some Basotho people in the township accommodated South African PAC refugees on the basis of their understanding, however limited, of the relationship between the PAC and the Basotho Congress Party, of which P.K. Leballo was founding member and patron.¹⁴ During the initial period when the first groups of PAC exiles trickled into Lesotho, the network of relatives of P.K. Leballo (a Basotho national and leader of the PAC) helped provide temporary accommodation to members of the PAC.

At a later stage, as the number of PAC exiles increased, Ellias Skamanie, a member of

¹⁰ PAC Archive, Fort Hare: C.L Lekaje: ‘Confidential’ A statement concerning the disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress (SA) to the African Liberation Committee, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, 17th November, 1967, p. 1.

¹¹ Interview with D.D.D. Mantshontsho, Umtata, 13 February 1995, a member of the National Executive Committee of the PAC in exile who lived both in Dar-es-Salaam and later in London.

¹² For more detail refer to Tom lodge: Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, pp. 295–369.; B Leeman: Africanist political Movements in Lesotho and Azania; T.M. Karis and G.M. Gerhart (eds.): From Protest to Challenge, Vol. 5; D.A.B. Mahlangu: From South Africa to Azania.

¹³ B. Leeman: Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania, p. 177; Interview with E. Mfafa, Kingwilliams Town, 24 July 1998.

¹⁴ B. Leeman: Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania, pp. 150–183.

the BCP provided accommodation to almost all the PAC exiles. His home is still regarded by the first generation PAC exiles as the home and the first PAC camp outside South Africa.¹⁵ What is not clear from the interviews is whether Skamanie was instructed by the BCP to accommodate the majority of PAC exiles or whether it was by his own volition. In spite of the widely indicated positive attitude of BCP supporters towards the small but growing PAC exile community, the barrier of language is said to have been a problem which made it difficult to communicate needs, advice and support. Most PAC members, as Elliot Mfafa put it, “had to learn SeSotho under a lot of pressure”.¹⁶

At the beginning, scattered PAC exile communities were not openly politically active but only marginally connected with what was happening in South Africa. The major pre-occupation of the first groups was concrete matters of survival. As Elliot Mfafa indicated during the interview, the main concern, during the first few months “was food and accommodation”.¹⁷ In spite of Skamanie’s accommodation, some groups of newcomers in the exile community were still in need of shelter and as a result were accommodated in temporary shelters in the back yards of houses.¹⁸ Even after the arrival of P.K. Leballo in August 1962, (as the new acting President of the PAC), these problems continued unabated. The more the number of PAC exiles grew in Lesotho, the more serious the problem of accommodation became. This resulted in the spread of PAC exiles to other towns and villages of Lesotho, for example, to areas such Mafeteng and Butha-butha.

As the exile community expanded, the problems facing this community also increased. Security became a serious problem among the Lesotho-based exiles. PAC members were arrested regularly by members of the Basutoland police, either on the grounds of entering the country without the necessary permits or on pure suspicion of pursuing a political agenda not acceptable to the government of the day.¹⁹ The PAC publication, *The Africanist*, summarised the situation as follows:

PAC freedom fighters escape from Vorster’s banishment, arrests, detention and imprisonment in the Republic of South Africa only to suffer the same persecutions in Basutoland. The Colonial Basutoland government not satisfied by the nefarious collaboration that exists between itself and Vorster’s Gestapo police, has decided to try out some of Vorster’s outrageous inhuman practices on PAC freedom fighters in this territory. Without giving

¹⁵ This is based on interviews conducted between February 1997 and December 2000 with M. Gqobose and E. Mfafa.

¹⁶ Interview with E. Mfafa, 22 July 1998.

¹⁷ Interview with E. Mfafa, 22 July 1998.

¹⁸ M. Gqobose indicated in the interview (29 July 1996) that some of the cadres lived as squatters in the backyards of houses of BCP members in Maseru.

¹⁹ B. Leeman: *Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania (SA), 1780–1984*, pp. 210–270; Interview with E. Mfafa and M. Gqobose, 22 July, 1998 and 29 July 1996, respectively.

any reasons and without any cause and/or justification for such an act the Basutholand government has restricted PAC members to the Magisterial district of Maseru and has asked them to report to the police regularly. The penalty for the violation of these orders is the withdrawal of the permit to be in Basutholand. By this desperate act, the British Imperialists hope to halt the inevitable. Come what may, PAC is irrevocably committed to overthrow white domination Now!²⁰

It is clear from the above statement that PAC exiles were regarded by Basutholand authorities as illegal immigrants. Most of them entered the country without permits or official passports. The Lesotho-based PAC leadership, which included people like Z.B. Molete, T.M. Ntantala, M. Gqobose and Elliot Mfafa, experienced periods of imprisonment for entering Lesotho illegally. They were required for a long period to report to the nearest police station on a daily basis. Under such circumstances, political activity was difficult. In spite of the hardship, the structures, which were to lay the foundations of a fully operational exile organisation, were set up during this period.

The reconstitution of PAC leadership structures in exile

The following questions are addressed in this section: Leadership of the PAC following the Sharpeville massacre, arrest of the existing leadership and the banning of the PAC in 1960? Who constituted the leadership of the formal PAC structure in Maseru? What kind of structure was it and how was it set up?

Z.B. Molete was appointed by Sobukhwe as the Acting President of the PAC whilst the rest of the leadership was in jail. Simultaneously, with Z.B. Molete's appointment, (effective from September 1960), was the appointment of J. Molefi as Acting Treasurer. They both served in these positions until August 1962. Other appointments made during the PAC's time of crisis included the interim appointment of Ellias Ntloedibe as PAC representative in Lesotho. People acting in these positions, together with Chairpersons of PAC regions inside South Africa, constituted the National Executive Committee of the PAC. In a letter from Sobukhwe dated August 25 1962, P.K. Leballo was appointed to act as PAC President. By the end of September 1962, the PAC convened a Presidential Council in Maseru. It was attended by groups of PAC members from various parts of Africa, and all PAC regional heads from South Africa. The Council resolved to endorse the Presidential appointment of P.K. Leballo (as acting President), elected J.N. Pokela as Secretary, M. Gqobose as member of the Presidential Council, T.M. Ntantala as member of the Presidential Council, Z.B. Molete as Secretary for Publicity and Information,

²⁰ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: The Africanist, Maseru, April, 1965, p. 11.

Zeph Mothopeng as Acting National Treasurer and E. Mfafa as National Organiser.²¹ In November 1963, T.T. Letlaka was co-opted to the Presidential Council by virtue of his position as chairman of the Transkei region. Representatives abroad were also members of the Presidential Council. They included E.L. Ntloedibe, who had become chief representative in Accra, Ghana; Patrick Duncan, the first white person to become a member of the PAC, a chief representative in Algeria; L. Mgweba, chief representative in Egypt; M. Nkoana, chief representative in Lagos, Nigeria; J.D. Nyaoase, Liaison Officer of Labour in Dar-es-Salaam; L. Masimini and Ms G. Mathuthe, assistants in the Labour desk in Dar-es-Salaam; S Ndlovu, chief representative in Botswana who was assisted by Mokone and M. Loabile; A.B. Ngcobo, Chief representative in Leopoldville, Congo; D. Ncayiyana, Chief representative in Lusaka, Zambia and R. Mkwana, chief representative in Manzini, Swaziland.²² The Presidential Council, as the new Committee was called, became the first formal PAC executive structure in exile. Mfafa argues that the structure was merely a formality because Leballo “did things by himself with only a few handpicked individuals from the national executive”.²³ There are in fact a number of similar positions that question and cast doubt on the legitimacy of the Presidential Council. These issues will be analysed in the next chapter.

The formation of the Presidential Council was followed by the declaration of a general statement of policy to regulate the relations between the Presidential Council and other previously existing PAC structures inside South Africa. The policy statement indicated that “the Presidential Council, acting with the powers vested in them by the Presidential Decree of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa and confirmed by the President, Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, who is armed with the said Presidential Decree passed by the national congress of the Pan Africanist held in Orlando, Johannesburg, 19th and 20th December 1959, have conferred on them absolute power to rule, govern, direct and administer the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa during all times the movement is banned and in revolution”.²⁴ The statement proceeded to say “from now hence forth we deem it in the best interests of the African revolution that orders and commands should emanate only from the Presidential Council at its headquarters in Maseru. Every other wing of the Movement shall take instructions from the headquarters”.²⁵ PAC representatives abroad were issued with a set of policy instructions which emphasised the central-

²¹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Background to official appointments and policy statement, pp. 2–3; B. Lee-man: *Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania*, p. 219.

²² PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Background to official appointments and policy statement, pp. 3–4.

²³ Interview with Elliot Mfafa, 21 July 1998.

²⁴ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Background to official appointments and policy statement, p.4.

²⁵ *Ibid.* p. 4.

sation of all powers and decision-making at headquarters. PAC representatives abroad were not allowed, as a matter of policy, to hold executive meetings or take executive decisions; their duties were limited to “building the true image of the PAC to the world”, “fearlessly putting across the message of the PAC and justifying its cause”, and procuring “money and any other help or assistance required for the successful accomplishment of the revolution”.²⁶ Unfortunately the policy statements were all too broadly framed and not backed up by any set of procedures to ensure proper implementation. On the whole, the policy statements disclosed an approach to power which set the tone for what became the first 17 harsh years of the PAC’s existence in exile. This issue is covered in detail in the first section of Chapter four.

Nonetheless, the existence of a formal leadership structure assisted in the conceptualisation of a few strategic documents for the exiled PAC. It helped create a political home for PAC refugees from South Africa and a single point of reference when authority on PAC matters was sought.

Development of strategy documents

One of the few achievements spearheaded by members of the Presidential Council, during the rather disorganised formative years of the PAC in exile, was the development of strategy documents and guidelines for the exiled organisation. Among the strategy documents produced by the PAC members in Lesotho during this period was a draft document on “Self-reliance and the Mobilization of resources in the PAC”.²⁷ The document enunciated the concept of self-reliance and its application under conditions of exile, in general, and under conditions in Lesotho, in particular. It explained self-reliance as a three-in-one principle which all PAC exiles had to follow in the following manner:

It is a principle, a policy and a method of struggle. It is a principle because it is unchangeable under any circumstances, for example, during the liberation struggle it is applicable and after liberation it is a guiding principle in nation building.²⁸

According to this document the PAC was to develop its own strategies of survival in the exile environment and not rely completely on the support of other nations. Self-reliance was seen as a policy which might be modified depending on “concrete conditions that ap-

²⁶ *Ibid.* p.5.

²⁷ The document was the brain-child of Mfanasekhaya Gqobose, who later became the PAC’s Secretary for Economic Affairs. Initially conceived in Lesotho, the document was refined in Tanzania into one of the policy documents of the PAC.

²⁸ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/16 : Self-reliance and the mobilization of resources in the PAC, n.d. p. 2.

ply at a particular time” in the course of the struggle.²⁹ Self-reliance was conceived of as a method to be used in the battle “particularly when waging a people’s war where survival” literally depends on what freedom fighters did “employing their own minds and utilizing their own hands” in the countryside where “they would have to survive tilling the land and living on wild fruits and other forms of sustenance from the forest”.³⁰ The strategy document on “Self-reliance” also introduced the concept of projects intended to procure funds “for a carefully designed scheme of self-reliance”.³¹

An important aspect of the strategy document related to the methods to be followed in order to mobilise resources from within the PAC. One of these methods involved ensuring that regional heads of the PAC inside South Africa collect and audit monthly subscriptions by PAC members and send a portion of the funds to the headquarters in Maseru. The second approach was to set “targets of funds and resources” for each financial year. It was not deemed unreasonable, for example, “to state that PAC needs 150 million US Dollars and 100 tons of materials of all kinds every year to wage struggle”.³² The principle which informed this method was that the minds of PAC members, friends and supporters needed to be conditioned to something definite and substantial. The self-reliance strategy of the PAC also talked to the importance of establishing departmental clusters which would take collective responsibility for the acquisition and usage of resources. For example, the department of economic affairs, the national organiser and publicity and information, were to be developed into a cluster for resource control and acquisition purposes. The document contained sound strategic proposals but the problem was that these were never implemented nor was there any official mechanism or system to ensure their implementation, resulting in the chaos which dominated the period of Leballo’s leadership. At the same time there were efforts, even though limited, to implement some of the strategic proposals on self-reliance in Lesotho. This is discussed in the section that follows.

The second policy document, “Guidelines on PAC cells abroad”,³³ conceptualised by PAC members in Lesotho, resulted in a set of official procedures and later adopted as policy by the PAC at its new headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam after 1964. According to

²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 2.

³⁰ *Ibid.* p. 2.

³¹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/16 : Self-reliance and the mobilization of resources in the PAC, n.d.

³² PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/16: Self-reliance and mobilisation of resources in the PAC, n.d., p. 7.

³³ The document was also adopted by a fully functional PAC structure in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. No date is indicated on the document. Interviews with PAC executive members who lived in Lesotho as part of the first group of exiles (i.e. Elliot Mfafa and M. Gqobose), point to the fact that the document was also conceived of at the Lesotho headquarters by the first group of exiles.

this document, PAC members in all parts of the globe, including countries neighbouring South Africa, were to organise themselves into cells consisting of not less than 10 members.³⁴ The cells were administered by a three person committee consisting of a coordinator who acted as chairperson, a secretary and a treasurer.³⁵ The duties of PAC cells abroad were not dissimilar to the underground PAC cells in South Africa, differing only in terms of constitution and scope of activities. PAC cells inside South Africa tended to have more elaborate committee structures and the focus of their activities was on political mobilisation and agitation.³⁶ The PAC cells abroad maintained a very slender constitution in terms of the numbers of people in each cell with the duties focused on liaison activities with international solidarity groups, non-governmental organisations, embassies and donor organisations.³⁷ The cells outside South Africa were intended to collect contributions from PAC members who were gainfully employed in the various host countries. According to the policy document, the organisation intended to be self-funding through the utilisation of internally generated funds and wanting to curtail dependence on donations from solidarity and support groups abroad. The extent to which the principles enshrined in these documents were translated into reality is difficult to assess, especially during the early period of exile, i.e. 1960–1962.

The practice of self-reliance by PAC exiles in Lesotho

Oral evidence confirms limited attempts by the Lesotho group to realise the self-reliance principle of the organisation. The Lesotho group started a “courier system” in order to link the exiles with internal underground PAC structures in order to raise funds needed to support the initiatives of the exile organisation.³⁸ The “courier system” entailed the use of a PAC member/s to serve a liaison function and to transfer messages and correspondence between Maseru and PAC underground branches in South Africa. Diphu was the first “courier” used by the small PAC exile communities in Lesotho to connect with underground structures in South Africa. Besides collecting money from the internal PAC structures, Diphu was used to spread the message to PAC members in South Africa not to flock into Lesotho, because of logistical problems and the attitude of the Basotholand government. Some messages were written on the inside cover of his jacket and were coded in such a way that the police would find it difficult to understand should they happen to

³⁴ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: J. Mkwanazi: Guidelines on PAC Cells Abroad, undated.

³⁵ *Ibid.* p.1.

³⁶ Interview with Malcom Dyan, Cape Town, 21 December 2000; TRC: PAC and Abuse of Human Rights, TRC Research Department.

³⁷ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: J Mkwanazi: Guidelines on PAC cells abroad p. 1.

³⁸ Interview with E. Mfana 23 July 1998 and Z. Diphu, 23 July 1998.

arrest him. To a limited extent the courier system helped to generate funds for the external PAC, but that was not enough to cover the cost of living in a foreign country. Diphu was later joined by Cynthia Lechaba and Patricia Lethalo as couriers. They were arrested in April 1963, at Caledon Bridge frontier, following a meeting between P.K. Leballo, Z.B. Molete and a single journalist, when Leballo disclosed PAC plans to launch an insurrection against the South African government.³⁹

The PAC exiles in Maseru decided to start a school for adult education as another attempt at generating funds for clandestine, but small-scale, PAC activities in Lesotho and also in other parts of Africa. The school was started at Seapoint, (in Maseru), with a few Basotho nationals who attended as students. The venue was a cleared area in the bush. The school grew to a point where, through BCP influence, a hall was granted to the exiles to conduct their classes. The hall was called “Alexander Hall” in Seapoint in Maseru.⁴⁰ Though not funded by the government, the exiles were able to derive income from teaching at the school. This assisted in the development of a rudimentary PAC infrastructure in the form of offices and covert military training of the first PAC guerrillas in Lesotho.⁴¹ The exiles eventually received funding for their initiative from the Lutheran Church in Geneva. This assisted with the purchasing of equipment for science classes and also the payment of salaries for teachers.⁴² The school was later recognised by the Lesotho government as a public school in 1965. Its curriculum and examinations were aligned with other public schools. The school was called Maseru Secondary Community School and it specialized in adult education. It offered Mathematics, Physics, Biology, Agricultural Science and the two languages (i.e. English and SeSotho). Most teachers at the Maseru Secondary Community School were PAC exiles and only a small number of teachers were Basotho nationals from the BCP.

The funds generated by PAC exiles who taught at the Community School helped to support not only new-comers in the exile communities but most importantly, the first group of PAC militants who started their training in Lesotho under the leadership of T.M. Ntantala, who later became the Commander of APLA forces in Tanzania. They

³⁹ The view about a “boisterous press conference”, articulated by Tom Lodge in *Resistance and Ideology in Settler societies*, particularly his article, “The *Pogo* insurrection, 1961–1968”, pp. 179–222 is contested by Bernard Leeman, “Africanist Liberation Movements in Lesotho and Azania”, p. 180. Leeman argues that the South African authorities were already working towards the implementation of drastic measures against the PAC as was recommended by the Snyman Commission. Leballo’s meeting with journalists was not the cause of the attacks on the PAC; D.A.B. Mahlangu: “From South Africa to Azania”, p.66, conveys the same impressions as B. Leeman.

⁴⁰ Interview with E. Mfafa, 24 July 1998.

⁴¹ Interview conducted by Walter Toboti with T.M. Ntantala, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, 1985.

⁴² Interview with E. Mfafa, 24 July, 1998.

were disguised as a rugby team. As the team expanded, it was divided into three teams, one in Maseru, one in Butha-butha and one in Mafeteng. These were the areas where the three “teams” conducted their physical and ideological training. This issue will be developed in Chapter six, which examines the evolution of the PAC military strategy.

Other projects of a self-reliance nature only bore fruit after the headquarters of the organisation had been moved from Maseru to Dar-es-Salaam in 1964. These included the acquisition of a site from local residents and a house built, for residential purposes, by PAC members in Maseru.⁴³ “Next to it a shed was built for shoe making. Attempts were also made to acquire land from Basuto Chiefs for planting food crops”.⁴⁴ These initiatives helped PAC recruits who passed through Lesotho to Tanzania at a later stage. Problems of accommodation and food shortages were reduced. PAC self-reliance initiatives in the areas of education and limited crop farming were later supported by the United Nation’s High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).⁴⁵ It is unfortunate that the UNHCR archives in Pretoria have no records covering this specific period. What complicates matters further is that documentary sources shift the focus to developments in Tanzania following the relocation of the PAC headquarters. The impression derived from oral information is that only the leadership of the PAC moved to Tanzania, while the bulk of the membership remained in Lesotho as part of the Basotholand Chapter of the PAC. Elliot Mfafa remained in Lesotho, to continue with PAC projects already started until he was recalled to the Dar-es-Salaam headquarters and deployed to Zimbabwe as Chief Representative and later Head of Education and Human Resource Development in the PAC. This happened after the arrival of Nyathi John Pokela in 1981.

Developments in other parts of the world

During this formative period in exile, PAC members in other parts of Africa and Europe engaged in various political initiatives. These initiatives, though uncoordinated, laid a foundation for a functioning exiled liberation organisation. During the short period between 1960 and 1962, the PAC was able to establish contact locations in London, Accra, Cairo, Francistown (Botswana), Dar-es-Salaam, Leopoldville (in Kinshasa), Algiers and Lagos in Nigeria.⁴⁶

The PAC also established itself in the neighbouring Botswana, even though clandestine

⁴³ PAC: Archives: PAC/Tan/1/164/16: Self reliance and mobilisation of resources in the PAC, p. 3; interview with Elliot Mfafa, 23 July, 1998.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴⁶ See T. Lodge: Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, p. 306.

tinely, given the hostile attitude of the Bechuanaland government towards the PAC exiles. The government of Bechuanaland adopted the same strategies as the Lesotho government in dealing with PAC exiles. It declared leading PAC officials, like Z.B. Molete, “prohibited immigrants in Bechuanaland” and harassed all foreigners suspected of being affiliated with the PAC.⁴⁷ The attitude of the then “Bechuanaland” government seemed to have persisted even after the country obtained its independence from Britain in 1966. The PAC Chief Representative in “Bechuanaland” found it difficult to operate because he was declared a “prohibited immigrant” by the “Bechuanaland” government.⁴⁸ The statement made by the PAC, and published in its internal publication, *The Africanist*, attests to the frustrations and difficulties the PAC had with the “Bechuanaland” government. The PAC articulated its frustration in the following manner:

However, we wish to awaken the Bechuanaland government to the realities of Africa today. The Pan Africanist Congress has made an unequivocal declaration that there is nobody, worse of all a foreigner, who has the right to tell the African people where to go and where not to go in this continent of Africa, from Cape to Cairo, from Morocco to Malagasy.⁴⁹

After independence, the Botswana government was only prepared to recognise those PAC exiles who had been officially granted refugee status, but the government was unwilling to tolerate political activities intended to overthrow the regime in South Africa. This should be understood against the background of the relations of economic dependence on South Africa outlined in Chapter 4. Thus, the PAC’s existence in Botswana had no political significance for the party, more especially in relation to the party’s military operations, as will be outlined in the chapters that follow.

In Accra, the capital of Ghana, there was a group of PAC exiles led by Nana Mahomo, Raboroko and Molotsi. Other members of this group included Mampe, Siboto, Nongauza, Ndibongo and Malomo.⁵⁰ Some of them had moved from Dar-es-Salaam to Accra at the beginning of 1962. It is not clear why they left Dar-es-Salaam for Accra. This group could not constitute a functioning structure as it was divided from the very outset. Ata Kgosana and Mgweba were accused by the Cairo PAC group of disloyalty to the exile leadership of the PAC (headed by P.K. Leballo). They left South Africa and went into exile without instruction from the leadership of the party. In addition, Kgosana established personal contacts using the “reputation” he earned when he led the marchers in Cape Town in 1960. Thus, when he left South Africa, he acted outside the established leadership

⁴⁷ PAC Archives: *The Africanist*, Maseru, 1965, p. 11.

⁴⁸ PAC Archives: “Reviewing the State of the Party”; Undated, No author, PAC Tanzania, p. 2.

⁴⁹ PAC Archives: *The Africanist*, Maseru, 1965, p. 11.

⁵⁰ A.T. Kgosana: *Lest We Forget*, p. 73.

structures of the party.⁵¹ Hence Mahomo, Molotsi and Raboroko insisted on disciplining the two fellow exiles. This divided not only the Accra-based group of PAC exiles but the Dar-es-Salaam and Lesotho groups as well. As a result of this, Ata Kgosana and Mgwema severed ties with the PAC and moved to Ethiopia.⁵² It appears that from that date, Ata Kgosana, in particular, ceased to be politically active and lived the life of an independent refugee until he was gradually brought back into the fold of active PAC politics during the period of Nyathi John Pokela's leadership, and later by Johnson Mlambo on the eve of the unbanning of the liberation movements and return of exiles to South Africa in 1990.

Even though loosely organised, the PAC had a recognisable presence in Accra in 1962 and the attitude of the government of Ghana, towards the PAC exiles, was positive. This was illustrated by the fact that late in 1962, President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, "bought a Swedish freighter for the PAC and had loaded it with arms in Egypt. The ship sailed south in early 1963 to land the weapons on the Transkei coast to assist the *Pogo* uprising. However, it never arrived. Later it emerged that it had been sold. One high ranking PAC official came under suspicion, but the matter was never resolved".⁵³

In Europe, the PAC commenced operations in London soon after the organisation was banned in 1960. An office was opened in 1962. The London office functioned independently and occasionally in conflict with the PAC headquarters in Maseru. The tensions between the London office of the PAC and the external headquarters seem to have persisted throughout the existence of the PAC in exile.⁵⁴ The main issue was about the control and utilisation of funds from the donors and solidarity groups in Britain. The UK mission only developed a fully-functioning and organised structure in 1977, with the appointment of Winston L. Mvusi as acting Chief Representative, reporting to the PAC headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam. Otherwise, before that date, the UK office was "completely unco-ordinated, loosely organised and without a clear set of procedures which tallied with the Headquarters".⁵⁵

In countries such as Egypt, Algeria, Congo and Ethiopia, PAC members operated more as individuals.⁵⁶ One would hardly refer to an organisational presence in those

⁵¹ This is a view expressed by Comrade Tekere (a member of APLA) during the interview in Cape Town's Langa Township, 21 December 2000.

⁵² A.T. Kgosana: *Lest We Forget*, p. 74.

⁵³ This is revealed in the research conducted by B. Leeman, published in the *Mail and Guardian*, 3–9 November, 2000, Harare, pp. 24–25.

⁵⁴ PAC Archives: *London Mission Records*; Also indicated in 'Reviewing the state of the Party, undated article, PAC Tanzania; The problems with the PAC London Mission seem to have persisted to the 1980's – see *Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee, Dar-es-Salaam, 1982*, p. 12.

⁵⁵ Interview with Z.H. Keke, East London, 1998. He was the PAC Chief Representative in London from 1982 to 1985.

⁵⁶ Interview with Malcom Dyan and Comrade Mchitheka, Gugulethu Township, Cape Town, 16 Decem-

countries. In Leopoldville (Kinshasa), the Dar-es-Salaam-based PAC leadership was only able to arrange for training of its guerrillas, without much noticeable organisational presence. What emerges from the discussion so far is that the PAC was an organisation that was scattered all over the world with only loose links to the centre. This situation persisted up to the 1980s. Serious efforts by the PAC leadership under John Nyathi Pokela, were made in the early 1980 and these included the development of procedures aimed at centralising authority and activating the controlling powers of the Dar-es-Salaam based headquarters. Other PAC offices were opened in countries such as Nigeria (which later became an important funder of the PAC in exile) where Vuyani Mgaza became the PAC chief representative. In the Middle East, the PAC sent Vusi Make to establish a satellite office and build a network of relations.

What this shows is that the PAC leadership (under Sobukhwe) had fully anticipated the internationalization of the South African struggle and understood the importance of diplomatic ties to give the liberation movement a moral high ground. This edition of the book does not examine how the PAC dealt with international allies and how much influence they had in the strategic choices of the PAC.

The PAC and the ANC – the South African United Front

One of the important initiatives in which the exiled PAC became involved with the ANC of South Africa, the South African Indian Congress and the South West Africa National Union (SWANU) of Namibia, was the formation of the South African United Front (SAUF) in June 1960.⁵⁷ Leading members from the ANC (Oliver Tambo, ANC President), Yusuf Dadoo (President of the South African Indian Congress) and PAC leaders such as Nana Mahomo and Peter Molotsi met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to discuss and agree on the formation of the South African United Front in June 1960.⁵⁸ In spite of the fact that existing oral evidence indicates that the formation of the front of liberation movements from South Africa and Namibia occurred as a result of the insistence of African leaders such as Nkwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, it appears that the liberation movements themselves saw tactical benefits that could accrue from the initiative.⁵⁹

ber 2000.

⁵⁷ Tor Sellstrom: *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa*, Vol. 2, *Solidarity and assistance, 1970–1994*. Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala, 2002, p. 499.

⁵⁸ ANC (SA): *Statement of the African National Congress of South Africa on the question of unity with the Pan Africanist Congress*, 31st Meeting of the Organisation of African Unity, Dar-es-Salaam, June 1978, p. 13.

⁵⁹ Interviews with M Gqobose, 29 July, 1996 and E. Mfafa, 25 July, 1998.

The South African United Front was formed in June 1960 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) was admitted in January 1961 as a member of the co-ordinating body. "However it never participated actively and withdrew some months later".⁶⁰ The aims of the Front of Liberation movements were to "effectively isolate the murderous regime of South Africa" and to project to the international community "a united voice of all political opponents of Apartheid, irrespective of political affiliation".⁶¹

From the very outset hostilities, especially between the ANC and PAC, emerged. The PAC's membership in the Front was an uncomfortable one. It accused the ANC of dominating the structure.⁶² ANC sources indicated that at the meeting of liberation movements in June 1960, in Addis Ababa, "by unanimous decision, it was agreed that the ANC should, as a senior organisation, lead the Front".⁶³ Even if this were the case, problems of ideology and power would inevitably have cropped up. Sellstrom concurs that besides the issue of ANC "dominance" in the structure, questions of an ideological nature arose. "PAC criticism was based on the same arguments that originally led to the breakaway, i.e. that the ANC was dominated by white communists and that it saw the struggle in class terms, not as a national struggle with the objective, "Africa for Africans"⁶⁴. The PAC thus raised questions about the ideological orientation of the Front, which was dominated and led by the ANC. From the perspective of the ANC the formation of the South African United Front (SAUF) was "an historic step whose significance was hailed by all oppressed people of South Africa, Namibia and the progressive world".⁶⁵ The Front evoked fears and panic on the part of the South African government and its allies. They could not "disguise bitter fears of isolation through the worldwide impact of the United Front and the struggle of people at home. Panic measures were adopted including a hurried knocking together of a South African Foundation which undertook to parry the impending isolation".⁶⁶

The South African United Front was a short-lived initiative due to the rivalries between the ANC and the PAC. "After a public attack in February 1962 by the PAC on

⁶⁰ Tor Sellstrom: *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa*, Vols. 1 and 2. Nordiska, Afrikainsitutet, Uppsala, 2002. p. 499.

⁶¹ ANC (SA): Statement of the African National Congress of South Africa on the question of unity with the Pan Africanist Congress, p. 14.

⁶² Interview conducted by Walters Toboti with T.M. Ntantala; interview with Elliot Mfafa, 26 July, 1998.

⁶³ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: *Statement of the African National Congress of South Africa on the question of unity with the Pan Africanist Congress*, p. 14; ANC Archives, Fort Hare: *The Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa; whom does it serve?*, Morogoro, Tanzania, undated, p. 6.

⁶⁴ Tor Sellstrom: *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa*, p. 499.

⁶⁵ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: *Statement of the African National Congress of South Africa on the question of unity with the Pan Africanist Congress*, p. 14.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.14.

the ANC at a conference in Addis Ababa – attended by Nelson Mandela – the SAUF collapsed. It was formally disbanded by the member organisations at a meeting in London the following month. From then on, the ANC and PAC embarked on separate and essentially antagonistic courses”.⁶⁷ Different views are expressed by PAC members about the failure of this initiative. One view is that the Front would not have worked in future given the personality and leadership style of P.K. Leballo, who later became the Chairman of the PAC. In most instances he took critical organisational decisions alone and would influence a few people who he knew would obviously tow his line.⁶⁸ This corroborates J. Bolnick’s description of the character and personality of Leballo, whom he describes as “controversial”, “an intelligent fabricator of information” and “a mesmerising orator” who skilfully concentrated powers in the PAC around himself.⁶⁹ If Bolnick’s description of Leballo is to be believed, the question arises as to the extent to which the human frailties of an individual at the helm of organisational leadership can account for the failures and mistakes of the entire organisation. This is a broad and difficult question not answered in the book. The extent to which the role played by PAC members in the SAUF could have been negatively influenced by Leballo’s leadership is difficult to assess at this point. The other view, largely from within the PAC, is that the front collapsed because it was dominated by the ANC and was not based on mutually understood revolutionary principles and practices. Oral evidence indicates that “the PAC had no choice but to walk out of the Front” because it was “being swallowed by the ANC”.⁷⁰ It could not continue with its membership without losing face as an independent organisation.

The SAUF eventually collapsed. During the short period of its existence, the PAC was able to derive few benefits from the international community. In October 1960, “only four months after the formation of the SAUF” Mahomo paid a visit to Sweden and addressed the Social Democratic Laboremus Association in Uppsala, together with Oliver Tambo of the ANC and Jariretundu Kozonguizi of SWANU. On that occasion, Mahomo established relations with the newly-formed South African Committee (SSAK) in Sweden and later with the Social Democratic Party”.⁷¹ It was through these connections that Mahomo, in 1963, was able to raise 100 Pounds Sterling from the Metalworkers Union

⁶⁷ Tor Sellstrom: *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa*, p. 499.

⁶⁸ The interview with E. Mfafa 25 July 1998, probably the oldest member of the PAC still alive, attests to this. Mfafa also indicates that even the meeting Leballo had with journalists in Lesotho in April 1963, is something he did on his own without involving or informing the leadership of the organisation.

⁶⁹ J. Bolnick: Structure and Experience in the Making of Apartheid; Sefela Sa Letsamayanaha – The War-time Experiences of Potalke Kitchener Leballo, *History Workshop*, Wits University, Feb. 1990, p. 1.

⁷⁰ This view was expressed by two PAC members interviewed, Z Mchitika and Tekere, in Langa Township, Cape Town, 16 and 21 December 2000, respectively.

⁷¹ T. Sellstrom: *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa*, Vol.1, p. 157.

of Sweden. The PAC was given the donation to help them “meet the immediate needs of refugees” and the same Union agreed to purchase a Land Rover “and ship it to the movement in Dar-es-Salaam”.⁷² The donation from the Swedish Trade Union was among the first donations received by the PAC from support organisations abroad. It went a long way towards the provision of basic necessities for PAC exiles in Lesotho and Tanzania. The support received by the PAC, from Sweden, was “however a once-off affair” as it was never repeated despite the numerous official representations by the PAC to request Swedish financial aid.⁷³ The divisions and internal conflicts within the PAC discouraged the Swedish from lending any further assistance to the organisation. This issue will be developed further in Chapter 4, which examines aspects fundamental to the generation of internal conflict in the PAC.

In summary, this chapter has examined how the PAC ended up in exile. It outlined how the first exile leadership structure of the PAC (the Presidential Council) was constituted and the conditions under which the first group of PAC exiles lived. The first group of PAC militants started their ideological and military training, has been covered and the strategic documents developed by members of the Presidential Council have been analysed. Developments in other parts of the world, where there was PAC presence, have been surveyed. The formation of the South African United Front, which involved mainly the PAC and the ANC, and why it collapsed, has also been examined. It appears from the way in which the PAC was reconstituted, as a liberation movement in exile, that numerous weaknesses existed and the potential for conflict was embedded in its foundations. Problems of factionalism, power struggles, divisions between the rank-and-file and the leadership of the organisation, as well as ideological disagreements, were manifested at a very early stage. There were no mechanisms of co-ordination between the centre and the various missions scattered all over the world and there was dissatisfaction from the very outset about how the National Executive Committee conducted the affairs of the organisation. These issues came out clearly during the 1970s and 1980s, as will be shown in the following chapters. At the same time there was a commitment among PAC members to fight the liberation war to the bitter end. It is this commitment which carried the PAC through into the 1990s when it was unbanned.

⁷² PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Letter from J.W. Ames to Nana Mahomo, Stockholm, January 1963; T. Sellstrom: Sweden and the National Liberation Movement in South Africa, Vol.1, pp. 499–500.

⁷³ T. Sellstrom: Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, Vol. 2, p. 500.

6 The Generation of Strained Intra-PAC Relations in Exile (1962–1990)

This section covers a long period and has been broken down into two chapters, each covering a specific period, Chapter 6A: the Leballo era and its immediate aftermath (1962–1979 and 1979–1981) and Chapter 6B: the revival periods of John Nyathi Pokela and Johnson Mlambo (1981–1985; 1985–1990, respectively). The leadership periods represented are those of Potlake Kitchener Leballo (affectionately called ‘PK’), Vusumzi Make, followed by John Nyathi Pokela (affectionately called ‘Poks’) and finally Johnson Mlambo. The periods not examined are those of Zephania Mothopeng, elected PAC President by the Central Committee at a meeting in Tanzania in 1986 and Clarence Mlamli Makwethu who became PAC President from the end of 1990–1995. Their periods of leadership were dominated and overshadowed by transitional negotiations, an issue covered in Chapter 9.

The premise informing the discussion in these chapters is that the organisational structures, policy formulation procedures, management of organisational resources, financial planning and controls in the PAC, were poor. Ideological conflicts, power struggles and political blackmail could have been controlled or minimized if organisational systems and procedures had been stronger. This was unlike the ANC structures, which having gone through similar experiences of splits and dissidence, was able to survive and ultimately emerge stronger than the PAC after the lengthy exile period. This does not discount the limited innovations and improvements which were made, especially during the period of Nyathi Pokela’s leadership.

However, the conflict in the PAC is difficult to examine in an exhaustive way. Its permutations are wide-ranging. It was not merely one, but several conflicts taking place almost simultaneously, on a variety of distinct levels in the structures of the PAC. Added to this problem is the fact that the views expressed in the primary sources are not consistent. Portions of the documentary materials about events were produced by people who were personally involved with PAC internal matters. One cannot expect them to have been impartial given their positions in the organisation. The unevenness of details in existing archival materials as well make it difficult to balance perspectives. The chapters therefore examine what appear as standard perspectives in archival material and secondary sources. Where possible, this is corroborated by oral evidence. The chapters delimit the scope of the topic by identifying three major points around which to structure the

analysis. These include the constitution and role of leadership, the management of organisational resources, including finances and the pervasive belief that the enemy existed within the organisation. I refer to the pervasive suspicion that rocked the organisation as “the internal enemy syndrome”.

The secondary literature on this subject is fraught with gaps. Contemporary scholarship on exile liberation movements in Southern Africa has not critically worked out the detail of the generation of internal conflict within exile liberation organisations. Lodge’s attempt, in *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, though very informative, is broadly framed and in many respects lacks detailed historical perspective.¹ It amounts to a narrative of conditions of exile rather than an analysis of how and why internal relations within the PAC in particular, became strained in the way that they did at various moments during the lengthy period of exile. What can be derived from Lodge’s analysis is a generalized political theory of the interrelationship between the conditions of exile, political ideology and strategies of national liberation movements such as the ANC and the PAC. The same can be said about the work of Thomas G. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart. At one level, their work provides the best construction design for an intelligent understanding of the generation of strained intra-PAC relations during the period of exile. At another level, it leaves the researcher hungry for more detail, which their research does not provide. Karis and Gerhardt contend that “the record of the PAC in exile was not illustrious. Its scattered and quarrelsome leaders failed to create stable structures or a continuity of respected leadership. Its years in exile are primarily of interest as a case-study of the perils faced by a movement unprepared for revolutionary work, dependant on foreign goodwill, only indirectly in touch with developments at home, and lacking in leadership, organisation, strategy and ideological clarity”.² This view is expressed by Tom Lodge in a different tone, as he mentions “hairsplitting doctrinal disputes” and “opposition into factions and personalities” characteristic of the general problems South African liberation movements experienced in exile.³ The extent to which these views assist the development of an understanding about the generation of conflict within the PAC is limited. The same generalisation could be made of the ANC. The internal dynamics of each organisation need to be closely examined, this Karis and Gerhardt, and Lodge fail to do. Hence, this chapter focuses on how the strained intra-PAC relations were generated,

¹ T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945* – see Chapter 12, “Revolutionary Exile Politics”, pp. 296–307.

² T.G. Karis and G.M. Gerhart (eds.): *From Protest to Challenge; A documentary History of South African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1990*, vol. 5, p. 47.

³ T. Lodge: *Black politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 296.

by examining the sources and patterns of conflict and deduces underlying dimensions not mentioned in existing scholarly works.

Sources on the generation of conflict within the PAC cannot be intelligible without a clear periodisation. This does not mean that the various periods identified were distinctly separated without any connecting threads of continuity. The periodisation, as already outlined, is intended to categorise the available primary evidence on this particular topic, on the basis of identified thematic issues that consistently emerge from the sources. My analysis accepts the premise that relations within the PAC began to be strained in 1962. Divisions within the organisation were present from its inception and the first National Executive Committee constituted, i.e. the seeds of division were laid in the period prior to 1962. The chapters focus on why and how the strained intra-PAC relations were generated within the context of the circumstances of exile. The starting point 1962 is used as it is only from that date that a functioning PAC structure developed in exile. As Lodge indicates, “until late 1962, there was very little organised activity by PAC members in exile”.⁴

Common issues which permeate the themes of analysis in the various periods include the following: Membership in the Central Committee was highly contested because it brought status, access to resources and privileges (e.g. accommodation, transport and sometimes cash) which were otherwise inaccessible to ordinary PAC members. Individual interests were always at the forefront. They tended to override and supercede the organisational imperative to be a successful liberation movement. This was a dominant trend in the leadership echelons of the PAC during the exile period, irrespective of who was at the helm of the organisation. Besides the position of the Chairman of the organisation, the other lucrative position which resulted in seriously strained relations within the leadership of the PAC was that of Chief Representative to the United Nations Observer Mission in New York. The position was usually assumed by a Director of Foreign Affairs. There were numerous other positions over which PAC leaders fought because such positions appeared more lucrative than others, but the allocation of such positions depended on the Chairman's support. Hence, people with an interest in these positions would make overtures of loyalty and support for the Chairman.

The PAC developed operational guidelines for each of its departments. In the absence of clear policies, these were supposed to fill the gap but unfortunately the heads of the departments, members of the Central Committee, their close friends and relatives, were always the first people to flout the regulations. PAC members outside this circle were forced to observe the regulations and some were punished severely for minor breaches.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 306.

This situation laid the seeds of deep division, factionalism and the syndrome of an internal enemy. The latter was exacerbated by the fact that the PAC had no system of screening or checking the previous political records of new recruits.

The organisation lacked strategic focus. Strategy is about the future and setting a clear vision that focuses organisational activities. Having examined the minutes of the planning sessions of the PAC, one notices how the meetings always degenerated into group fights, mudslinging and apportioning of blame. There was hardly a chance to define in clear terms the kind of future the organisation was working towards and relating the vision of this future with the state of the organisation. PAC leadership planning sessions tended to be too operational in focus and lacked discussion of long-term strategy. This was a problem throughout the exile period. Without long-term strategy, it was inevitable that the mobilisation and deployment of resources would be limited.

These issues cut across the thematic categories which this chapter has identified. Of course, there may be aspects of the internal conflict which have been missed or which cannot be fitted into the relatively tight confines of the themes identified in this chapter. Perhaps future research on this subject will uncover and analyse such issues.

6A The Leballo Era and its Immediate Aftermath (1962–1981)

The period of Potlake Kitchener Leballo (1962–1979)

P.K. Leballo: Background and profile

Potlake Kitchener Leballo “maintains a position of reverence, albeit precariously, in the pantheon of South African radical names”.⁵ Thus it is critically important to understand P.K. Leballo in order to grasp the generation of strained intra-PAC relations during the period 1962–1979 and beyond.⁶ The quality of his political leadership during this period left an indelible mark on the character of the exiled PAC. This was the case given the as-

⁵ J. Bolnick: *Structure and Experience in the Making of Apartheid*; Sefela Sa Letsamayanaha – The war-time experiences of Potlake Kitchener Leballo, 1990, p. 1.

⁶ The Leballo period can be divided into shorter periods according to important events which occurred. For instance, 1962 to 1964 was the formative period which was relatively uneventful, except for the March 1963 press conference which resulted in the arrest of many PAC members. 1965 to 1967 which marked the serious manifestation of internal conflict hence the summoning of the Moshi Conference. 1968–1979 which began with the Villa Piri expedition, resulted in the death of Gerald Kondlo – the first commander of APLA and also culminated in the expulsion of Leballo from the PAC in 1979. This Chapter is mindful of this detailed periodic sequence in its examination of the Leballo era.



Fig. 3 Potlako Kitchener Leballo (left) in the late 1950s.

sumption, indicated by Lodge, that the quality of political leadership matters more with young organisations than with well established ones. Young liberation organisations are generally relatively unstable and therefore susceptible to being shaped by their leading figures.⁷

Leballo was born in Lesotho on December 19, 1922. He studied at Lovedale in the Eastern Cape where he was exposed to South African politics. Thereafter he taught at an Anglican mission school in Lady Selborne in Pretoria. In both institutions Leballo came into severe conflict with white Anglican ministers. He was eventually expelled from Lovedale in 1946 following a student uprising in which he participated. Given his experiences in Lovedale and the often paternalistic manner in which Leballo was treated at the mission in Lady Selbourne, Joel Bolnick concludes that it was not surprising “that Leballo became an impassioned opponent of co-operation between African nationalists and white radicals”.⁸ In addition to this, Leballo’s attitude was hardened by his wartime experiences. “Forced to endure racial discrimination while enlisted in an army that was ostensibly fighting to rid the world of race hatred and oppression, he had been sufficiently

⁷ T. Lodge: *Black politics in South Africa since 1945*

⁸ J. Bolnick: Double-cross: Potlake Leballo and 1946 Riots at Lovedale Missionary Institution, African Studies Seminar, paper No. 264, *African Studies Institute*, University of the Witwatersrand, 1990, pp. 24–25.

embittered to earn an early repatriation on the grounds of rebellious behaviour”.⁹ In addition to his wartime experiences, his role in the formation of the PAC, “which has often been denigrated, contributed to his handling the organisation as his personal property”.¹⁰ He was a founder member of the PAC and was arrested with Sobukhwe, President of the PAC, on March 21 1960. He served a two-year jail sentence after which he was granted permission to go to Maseru in Lesotho in August 1962.

This particular section highlights the difficulties of Leballo’s leadership and shows how they were concretely reflected in the management, use of funds and other organisational resources, the composition and role of the leadership as represented by the Central Committee, and the internal enemy syndrome. This section does not, however, provide an examination of the mythology, both positive and negative, which surrounded Leballo as a person and his period of leadership in the PAC. Bolnick covers this, even though not comprehensively.¹¹ He, however, fails to link his analysis with internal practices of the exiled PAC during Leballo’s leadership period.

Suffice to say that Leballo’s personality and character contributed towards the dented image the PAC incurred during the period 1962 to 1979. Leballo was an extremely controversial person. As Jack Halpern puts it, “but political jail sentences were not the only ones that Leballo served in South Africa; he had also been sentenced for fraud, forgery and uttering. He has the reputation for personal instability which may account for his calling of the Maseru press conference in the first place, for the exaggerated claims which he made, and for the denials with which he followed them a few days later”.¹² The Johannesburg *Sunday Express* described Leballo as a “liar, fool, braggart”.¹³

The controversies around Leballo’s personality and leadership style dwarfed the performance of the PAC in exile. Some of the controversies were raised in the report from a faction of the PAC, to the OAU Liberation Committee, in November 1967. The report compiled by C.L. Lekaje testified that “truthfulness is not one of his attributes”.¹⁴ The report pointed out that “Leballo’s lying and inconsistency, go hand in hand, and this has embarrassed the PAC as a whole”.¹⁵

However, B. Leeman’s work, even though in a defensive tone, provides an alternative

⁹ J. Bolnick: Double-cross: Potlake Leballo and 1946 Riots at Lovedale Missionary Institution, p. 14.

¹⁰ D.A.B. Mahlangu: *From South Africa to Azania*, p. 80.

¹¹ J. Bolnick: Structure and Experience in the Making of Apartheid; Sefela Sa Letsamayanaha – The wartime experiences of Potlake Kitchener Leballo, pp. 1–30.

¹² Jack Halpern: *South African Hostages*, p. 27.

¹³ *Sunday Express*, 31 March 1963.

¹⁴ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: “Confidential”- A Statement concerning the disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress (SA), p. 7.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p.7.

view about Leballo's personality and role in the PAC. First, he engages Halpern's criticism and description of Leballo's personality. He argues that "Jack Halpern blamed the raid on Leballo's "personal instability and his love for exaggerated claims. At the same time, Halpern studiously ignored the 8,000 arrests that resulted from Mandela's ultimatum in 1961, calling him widely admired and even revered for his courageous underground leadership".¹⁶ Leeman develops his argument further and points out that "Leballo's success in inflaming the most wretched, the most violent and the most 'ungrateful' sections of the African population brought him more hatred from the liberal-elitist establishment than it reserved for the system it ostensibly opposed. His tutor at Lovedale and comrade in arms in North Africa, Professor Macquarrie and Motsukoe Pheko (a PAC leader and once President of the unbanned PAC) both linked Leballo to the Nazis, while the South African liberal press, with its prejudice about who should be African leaders – graduates, army officers, ordained ministers or chiefs – derided his hopes for freedom, addressing him as "self-appointed" leader of the PAC."¹⁷

Leeman argues for and demonstrates that there was an ongoing smear campaign against Leballo, since April 1963. It involved myth-making exercises "put about by the PAC's most implacable opponents".¹⁸ He then concludes that "Leballo, despite his reputation for urgency and spontaneity, reoriented the party towards the idea of a lengthy struggle reliant on the same "illiterate" and "semi-illiterate" masses (based on the Chinese model) "to whom Sobukhwe had appealed. The crises within the PAC in exile thereafter were primarily caused by this radical shift in emphasis, which was not acceptable to the bulk of the personnel in the external missions".¹⁹

Unfortunately, the evidential basis of Leeman's argument is slender. As will be evidenced, material from within the PAC and from outside, confirms that Leballo's personality cannot be ruled out as an important factor in the turbulent and strained intra-PAC relations which predominated during the period 1962 to 1979.

The composition and role of the exile leadership as represented by the National Executive Committee

The external leadership of the PAC was constituted at the end of September 1962 when Leballo, having been released from exile in Northern Zululand, proceeded to Basutoland

¹⁶ B. Leeman: *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania*, p. 180.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* p. 181.

¹⁸ B. Leeman: *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania*, p. 181.

¹⁹ B. Leeman: *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania*, p. 182.

in August 1962, and “unilaterally declared Maseru the headquarters of the PAC”.²⁰ “This caused great consternation in the ranks of the PAC but under the circumstances the most that could be done was to protest in hushed tones owing to the fact that the organisation had been declared illegal”.²¹ Leballo proceeded to convene a Presidential Council consisting of himself as Acting President, and “J.N. Pokela, M.P.L. Gqobose, Z.B. Molete, E. Mfafa, N.M. Ntantala and T.T. Letlaka”.²² From the very outset it appears that appointments to the Presidential Council were not conducted in a democratic manner. As Lekaje indicated in his submission to the African Liberation Committee (A.L.C) of the O.A.U, Leballo, “appointed his admirers to be members of the Presidential Council. This Council then assumed the duties of the National Executive Committee”.²³ According to Lekaje’s submission, Leballo knew that the designations were unconstitutional but he proceeded because of his greed for power. After the 1963 press conference which crippled the newly-formed exile movement, Leballo used the powers he derived from his position of leadership in the National Executive Committee to shield himself from a possible commission of enquiry into the 1963 “deadly fiasco”.²⁴

Between 1962 and 1967, the National Executive Committee, led by Leballo, sanctioned activities by PAC members which were divisive within the organisation. A case in point was the involvement of PAC members in the affairs of the Basutoland Congress Party (BCP). The latter was a nationalist movement for the liberation of Lesotho (Basutoland) from British colonial rule. It competed with the moderately conservative Basutoland National Party (BNP). Leballo, being a Basutoland national, was instrumental in the formation of the BCP and contributed to its Pan-Africanist outlook. When the PAC was formed, “fraternal and solidarity ties with the Basutoland Congress Party” were developed.²⁵ “However, during Leballo’s administration, he encouraged participation by the PAC members in the activities of the said Basutoland Congress Party, which culminated in the PAC members being involved in Basutoland politics (later to become independent Lesotho). Leballo, as a Mosotho (citizen of Basutoland), had every right to do so. In fact,

²⁰ PAC Archives: “Confidential” – A Statement concerning the disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress (SA) p. 1; Elliot Mfafa, in an interview conducted with the author implied the same thing when he indicated that Leballo took important decisions alone without consulting the leadership of the PAC.

²¹ *Ibid.* p. 1.

²² B. Leeman: *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania*, p. 178.

²³ PAC Archives: “Confidential – A Statement concerning the disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress (SA) to the African Liberation Committee”, p. 2.

²⁴ PAC Archives: “Confidential” – A Statement concerning the disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress (SA) to the African Liberation Committee, p. 3.

²⁵ PAC Archives: “Confidential” – A Statement concerning the disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress (SA) to the African Liberation Committee, p. 3.

on a number of occasions he addressed BCP gatherings there. As a result of this involvement, one PAC member was killed in the Rotho ambush in the company of the BCP, where the latter held a rally”.²⁶ Some members of the PAC in exile felt that Leballo was using the PAC, including its resources, as a ladder to a possible position of power, in case the BCP was to become the government of Lesotho. This strained the relations within the PAC, and the situation continued unresolved until Leballo was deposed from leadership in 1979. Other PAC members based in Lesotho, saw a strategic significance for the PAC in the relationship. As Mfafa indicated, “without the fraternal relationship with the BCP, life would have been impossible for PAC members in Lesotho”.²⁷ What this shows is that the PAC, like many exile liberation movements was divided, first and foremost around questions of survival in an exile environment and the alliances forged with other political organisations in foreign lands.

The period 1962 to 1964, which could have been used for establishing systems and procedures to mould the PAC into an effective exile liberation movement, was utilised negatively, to lay the foundations for disorder. The Leballo period of administration is blamed for this. Leballo, who “most greedily” craved for “absolute personal power over both the whole Party and the entire army, as opposed to the PAC’s founding principles of collective leadership, common responsibility and democratic centralism”, failed to live up to the challenges of his leadership role.²⁸

A few important documents setting out the basic organisational systems and procedures generated during his period of leadership needed a visionary leader to manage their implementation. The Lesotho group produced a concept document about “Self-reliance and the mobilisation of resources in the PAC”.²⁹ This particular document addressed a number of wide-ranging issues regarding how the PAC should operate in a co-ordinated fashion in exile. It addressed issues such as the functions of the departments within the PAC and it identified common objectives and collective responsibilities of certain departments. By implication, the document suggested the development of “departmental clusters” on the basis of identified common objectives. The National Organiser’s Department, the Foreign Affairs’s Department, the Publicity and Information Department and the Economic Affairs Department were among the departments recommended to collaborate

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²⁷ Interview with Mr Elliot Mafafa, 25 July 1998, Kingwilliams Town.

²⁸ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: T.M. Ntantala (Deputy Chairman of the Central Committee): The Crisis in the PAC, 4 April, 1978, p. 12.

²⁹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: M. Gqobose: “Self-reliance and the mobilization of resources in PAC”, Undated, pp. 7–9.

closely in order to make the PAC viable in exile.³⁰ “Guidelines on PAC Cells Abroad” were developed during this formative period (1962–1964) but only found their way to becoming official policy in the 1980s, during the post-Leballo period. More than questions of ideology, it was the absence or poor implementation of procedures, guidelines and policies, which created grounds for strained relations and conflict within the PAC. The turbulence, which occurred from 1965 onwards, was nurtured during this period.

The early draft policy or procedure documents of the PAC are all remarkably thin on the issue of co-ordination and control of funds. The issue about the management and use of funds seems to have been the major bone of contention within the organisation during the exile period. Except for the PAC constitution, the PAC needed to establish a set of guidelines on managing donor funding from various sources scattered all over the world, an issue which the PAC Constitution (developed under early conditions of legality inside South Africa) did not cover. This issue will be covered in more detail in the sub-section about the use and management of funds within the PAC.

During the Leballo period, the organisation gradually lost the reputation it had under Sobukhwe’s leadership. What worsened the situation was that “in Maseru, Leballo made dubious friends who consequently became involved in PAC affairs”. Hans Lombard, for instance, a South African white Afrikaner, “who carried a British passport”, was given a letter of credence by Leballo as a PAC roving representative. “Leballo let him into many Party secrets”.³¹ The role Hans Lombard played was controversial and it is alleged that he knew of the pending arrests which followed Leballo’s press conference. The ANC, a political rival of the PAC, dubbed Lombard “an Apartheid agent and informer” yet a friend of the PAC.³² Another incident which caused great discontent within the ranks of the PAC involved an academic from the United States who knew Leballo in Lesotho. The young American academic used to help PAC refugees from Maseru to Botswana in his Land Rover. In 1966 the unnamed American academic came as far as Mbeya, one of the PAC camps in Tanzania where trained cadres were accommodated.³³ The PAC membership was disgruntled with the incident, given that Leballo was known to have had nothing to do with Americans, in the literal sense.

Lekaje, an opponent of Leballo, explained the incident in the following way. “As far back as 1958” Leballo worked for the American government in the Library of the US

³⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 7–9.

³¹ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: The African National Congress of South Africa: The Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa; Whom Does It Serve?, pp. 1–24.

³² *Ibid.* pp. 1–24.

³³ PAC Archives: “Confidential”- A Statement concerning the disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress (SA) to the African Liberation Committee, p. 3.

Consulate in Johannesburg. "So his continued allegations that persons are informers or CIA agents should be taken with a pinch of salt for it can easily be a ruse to cover up his own activities".³⁴ By implication, Leballo was an informer himself. In this instance, a PAC member was corroborating a point made by the exile ANC about Leballo.³⁵ Unfortunately this assertion about Leballo is not verifiable from the documentary sources and oral information used during the research.

These incidents did not only tarnish the political image of the PAC, but depleted the morale of the PAC exile community. The ANC, in one of its propaganda documents, painted a hopeless picture of the PAC. The formation of the PAC was described in the following manner:

At the end of 1958, a small band of disruptive adventurers that had for some time been active within the ranks of the African National Congress finally broke away. Early in 1959, after a lengthy meeting held in the luxurious premises of the library of the United States Information Service (USIS) in Johannesburg, they decided to form a 'revolutionary' political organisation which they called the 'Pan Africanist Congress'. Thus the dark schemes of American imperialist subversion of the successful development of the national liberation revolution against apartheid fascism were clearly exposed to the light of day.³⁶

At that point, the PAC's Information Department, which was in charge of propaganda, could not respond. The department was hardly functioning before 1982 when Nyathi Pokela made efforts to revitalise the PAC departments and re-organise the PAC. This meant that the PAC had no counter-propaganda of its own. Until the mid-1980s the organisation was like a "hidden reality" to many people inside South Africa; very few knew it existed but this could hardly be verified.

In August 1964 another incident occurred which damaged the political stature and credibility of the PAC further and defined more clearly the lines of difference between the rank-and-file membership and the leadership. During this particular year, "Leballo was granted passage through South Africa in a chartered aircraft. He made a stop-over in Johannesburg for about 30 minutes and his aircraft was heavily guarded by the South African regime, he being the only man who had ever threatened military action on South Africa whilst in a neighbouring territory. The South African government appeared to have been more than benevolent in his case".³⁷ This incident raised many political questions

³⁴ PAC Archives: "Confidential" – A Statement concerning the disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress (SA) to the African Liberation Committee, p. 4.

³⁵ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: The African National Congress of South Africa: The Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa; Whom Does It Serve?, pp. 1–24.

³⁶ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: The African National Congress of South Africa: The Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa; Whom Does It Serve?, p. 1.

³⁷ PAC Archives: "Confidential"-A Statement concerning the disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress

about Leballo and his leadership team. One of the questions was how it could be possible that a man who was so “dangerous” and wanted by the South African government could be allowed by the same government, not only to pass through South Africa but also to stop over in Johannesburg. The terms of the conditions of the release granted to Leballo by the SA government must have made this possible. Leballo was released from banishment to Northern Zululand on the grounds that he was a Basutoland national and was therefore allowed to go back to his country.³⁸ Therefore in legal terms, he could still come to South Africa. Whatever the nature of his political activities, the South African government too had a political agenda based on the détente approach of the John Voster era.³⁹ To the rank and file membership of the PAC, the incident raised suspicion; “their confidence in the revolutionary integrity of their leadership was shaken”.⁴⁰

What can be regarded in broad terms as the formative period of the PAC in exile, ended with no consolidation of achievements. Members of the PAC were loosely scattered all over the world. Some of them had completed military training but were not deployed anywhere. “The upheavals in the PAC forced them to look elsewhere”.⁴¹ Some decided to pursue academic careers but expressed their preparedness to return to the PAC once the party machinery was streamlined.⁴²

A foretaste of things to come – expulsions from the PAC

The wounded organisational psyche, which was to dominate the entire exile period of the PAC, assumed serious proportions from 1965. Among the early high-profile expulsions in the PAC was J.D. Nyaose in 1965.⁴³

It took place on the 12th of August 1965. J.D. Nyaose, a founding member of the PAC, was the national President of the Federation of Free African Trade Unions of South Africa (FOFATUSA), a position which he continued to occupy while in exile. FOFATUSA was a free and independent “national labour militant movement not affiliated into the PAC”.⁴⁴ “The Trade Unions affiliated to the FOFATUSA had been engaged in

(SA) to the African Liberation Committee, p. 5; ANC Archives, Fort Hare: The ANC of South Africa: ‘The Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa; Whom Does It Serve? p. 11.

³⁸ Of course this is despite Leballo’s claims, as explained by Leeman, that he escaped from South Africa. Elliot Mfafa also concurred in an interview, 21 July 1998, Kingwilliams Town, that Leballo was released by the SA government to go back to his “native land”.

³⁹ O. Geyser: *Détente Southern Africa*, p. 30.

⁴⁰ An informal conversation with Mr Mchiteka of the PAC, Langa, Cape Town, 16 December 2000.

⁴¹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: C.J Lekaje – “Confidential”: p. 7.

⁴² *Ibid.* p. 7.

⁴³ The same point is made by T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 309.

⁴⁴ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: J.D. Nyaose: Circular Letter No.1: Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa

the struggle since the early forties, described as National Trade Unionism in the country. They decided to come together in October, 1959, to form the Federation of Free African Trade Unions of South Africa".⁴⁵ J.D. Nyaose held the position of chairman of all party conferences of the PAC and Secretary for Labour, as well as being a member of the party's central committee. His expulsion, on arbitrary grounds, was a foretaste of things to come in the sense that it demonstrated how the centralisation of power and authority in the hands of one person, i.e. P.K. Leballo, was used to victimise opponents, critics and sometimes innocent members of the Party.

The main issue, which led to Nyaose's expulsion from the party, was his refusal to surrender the independence of FOFATUSA to the PAC. He was not prepared to "surrender, even to allow discussions of FOFATUSA matters, property, offices and funds by leaders of the Party who were not members of the trade union themselves, not appointed officials, who were in fact anti-trade unionism".⁴⁶ On August 11th 1965, Nyaose and his group attended the Indonesian Independence celebrations to represent FOFATUSA. The following morning Leballo and P.N. Raboroko (a member of the Central Committee) met and decided to expel Nyaose and suspend all PAC members who also belonged to FOFATUSA. Circulars and cables signed by Leballo were circulated in Dar-es-Salaam and to the Africa Liberation Committee of the OAU announcing the suspension. One circular to the Department of Home Affairs in Tanzania, requested the Tanzanian government not to allow FOFATUSA to open and operate a labour office in the country.⁴⁷

J.D. Nyaose responded by addressing the matter to the African Liberation Committee of the OAU. In his response, he emphasised the unconstitutionality of the decision taken by Leballo and Raboroko. He argued that "since the Acting-President Leballo's expulsion order signed by himself and P.N. Raboroko, was not based on any order of decisions handed to the Central Committee (NEC) by three members of the Disciplinary Tribunal of Justice, in terms of the Pan Africanist Congress Disciplinary Code and relevant constitution, the expulsion letters and circulars and cables were in fact null and void. The basic documents of the PAC are binding on members and leaders alike. I could not be expelled by Messrs Leballo and Raboroko, including any other NEC member other than the Disciplinary Tribunal of Justice members".⁴⁸ In spite of this protest, Nyaose and his group could hardly win over the support of the Tanzanian

at Home and Abroad, p. 3.

⁴⁵ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: J.D. Nyaose: Circular Letter No.1: Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa at Home and Abroad, p. 3.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* p. 1.

⁴⁷ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: JD Nyaose: Circular Letter No.1, pp. 1–6.

⁴⁸ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: JD Nyaose: Circular Letter No.1. pp. 2–3.

authorities because of the support Leballo enjoyed with the Tanzanian government. With the help of the Home Affairs Ministry in Tanzania, Leballo was able to get some PAC trade unionists either imprisoned or declared illegal in Tanzania. The response from the African Liberation Committee (ALC) to Nyaose's submission was not useful. The ALC dismissed the conflict between Nyaose's group and Leballo as an internal PAC matter which should be resolved internally by the PAC. This meant that Leballo could continue with the victimisation of party members who disagreed with him. Following the expulsion of J.D. Nyaose and the suspension of PAC trade unionists, a spate of suspensions and expulsions occurred within the PAC. Nyaose defied his expulsion order and refused to move away from the Party until he was officially reinstated and integrated into the new National Executive Committee at the Moshi Unity Conference in September 1967.

The expulsion of the Botswana PAC group in 1965 occurred almost simultaneously with the Leballo – Nyaose feud. The PAC Botswana group was comprised mostly of people who were victims of arrests following the March 1963 Leballo press conference. This group requested, in a memorandum signed in July 1963, that a conference be summoned “where a postmortem of the Maseru debacle, the streamlining of the organisational machinery and the general revitalisation of the party” could be discussed.⁴⁹ The request for such a conference was not only rejected “but the signatories to that memorandum were subjected to continual persecution culminating in the suspension of the core of that group in 1965”.⁵⁰ Most of the members of the group fled and sought political asylum in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia.

As the period 1965 to 1967 drew to a close, tensions within the PAC leadership had reached boiling point. No one within the ranks of the PAC National Executive was bold enough to call for unity within the ranks of the leadership in order to depose Leballo, in spite of the fact that there were signs within the organisation that the PAC membership was “fed up with him”.⁵¹ “In July 1967 A.B. Ngcobo and P.N. Raboroko attempted to assume control of the Dar-es-Salaam office, and the ensuing scuffle was followed by the temporary closure of the office by the OAU/ALC”.⁵² These events eventually led to the summoning of the leadership conference at Moshi in Tanzania in September 1967.⁵³

⁴⁹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: CJ Lekaje – “Confidential”, p. 4.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* p. 4

⁵¹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: CJ Lekaje – “Confidential”, p. 6.

⁵² T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 311.

⁵³ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: The Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa; Whom Does It Serve? pp. 1–24; T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 311.

The Moshi “Unity” Conference – effects on the PAC

The Moshi Conference, summoned with the support of the ALC of the OAU, was intended to be a unity conference to heal the longstanding grounds of contention within the ranks of the leadership of the PAC. Instead, it endorsed some of the expulsions Leballo had started. The expulsion of A.B. Ngcobo was confirmed. A new structure called the “Revolutionary Command” was set up to replace the Presidential Council and its headquarters was established in Lusaka (Zambia) in December 1967. Re-establishing the links with the internal struggle in South Africa became the reason for relocating the headquarters to Lusaka and establishing the Revolutionary Council.⁵⁴ This arrangement was, however, short lived as the PAC was expelled from Lusaka by the Zambian government in 1971 because of its internal conflicts.

The summoning of the Moshi Conference generated tensions within the PAC. As expressed in C.J. Lekaje’s submission to the Africa Liberation Committee (ALC) of the OAU, PAC members “never expected that the leadership who had ample time to meet would have to be brought together by the ALC”.⁵⁵ What dismayed the general membership even further, was the fact that they were the ones who had asked, four years previously, for a conference similar to the Moshi Conference, yet were left out when this conference was held. The general membership questioned the credentials of those who were invited to be part of the deliberations at the conference. Among the issues raised by PAC members was one about “an ex-South African beauty queen” who “was flown from London at enormous cost to attend the Moshi Conference where she participated in the discussions. Yet one senior party official, (whose name is not mentioned in the records), took the trouble to be at Moshi but was refused participation in the conference. To make it worse, he was asked to refund the ALC Secretariat the costs of traveling to Moshi”.⁵⁶ In addition to this, the general membership raised concerns about the fact that the PAC leadership did not seek a fresh mandate from them before attending the conference. The conclusion the general membership drew was that the Moshi Conference created “greater doubts and a sense of uncertainty”.⁵⁷ It “widened the rift between the leaders and the led”.⁵⁸ The issue of internal democracy within the liberation movement now began to as-

⁵⁴ However, it should be noted that PAC headquarters in Lusaka existed for a short time as the organisation was expelled from Zambia in 1970 due to its inactivity inside South Africa and its tendency towards internal conflict. For more details on this matter, see T. Lodge: Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, pp. 305–314.

⁵⁵ PAC Archives: C.J. Lekaje: “Confidential”, p. 6.

⁵⁶ PAC Archives: C.J. Lekaje: “Confidential”. p. 8.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* p. 8.

⁵⁸ PAC Archives: C.J. Lekaje: “Confidential”, p. 8.

sume prominence and was to haunt the PAC throughout its period in exile and last until after its unbanning in 1990.

Problems regarding the composition and role of the PAC leadership remained unresolved during the period 1968 to 1979. The leadership of the PAC under Leballo never reached a stage where it functioned as a collective. Leballo's leadership style was divisive in the sense that he would select from the Executive Committee whomever he needed for a particular purpose, to work exclusively with him and ignore or sideline the entire Committee. This resulted in a situation in which the National Executive Committee was perpetually divided within itself. The Moshi Conference provided no drastic solutions. P.K. Leballo continued to rule the PAC even though there were signs that the Executive Committee and the general membership of the organisation were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with his leadership. Up to that point, the Tanzanian government and the African Liberation Committee of the OAU were still prepared to grant him the benefit of the doubt, providing support and advice to his leadership, but this did not continue for too much longer.

The internal “enemy syndrome”, 1962–1979

During the early days of the PAC inside South Africa, it was normal practice and the duty of each member to guard the organisation against infiltration by Apartheid spies and ensure strict discipline among the membership. The Oath of Allegiance was an important reference in this regard. PAC members formed close-knit cell structures and general meetings served as a source of inspiration and guidance. In exile, these practices were weakened by the uncertainty of the exile environment, as well as the unclear future and direction of the liberation struggle. PAC members from different regions and backgrounds in South Africa found themselves thrown together in a single, but diverse exiled political community. Without organisational policy or strategy on how to handle and accommodate “differences” among themselves, disorders of an obsessive-compulsive nature were fermented. Hence the term “syndrome” is used in this section to designate a “sickness” of a non-pathological nature within an organisation. Leballo can hardly escape the blame for this; he perverted the sound principles of strict discipline and the commanding powers vested in the President of the PAC as indicated in the PAC Constitution and Disciplinary Code.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ See: Pan Africanist Congress: Disciplinary Code, pp. 91–92. For a detailed discussion of the weaknesses of the Disciplinary Code and the PAC constitution itself, refer to the discussions in Chapter 3. On the whole, Leballo perverted the clause in the Disciplinary Code which states “where normal processes of free discussion fail to curb factional tendencies, then firm iron discipline should come into play, and

The tendency to label, tag and spread distorted impressions about critics, potential competitors for power, independent thinkers and people who did not fit with any faction, were the negative spin-offs resulting from a perverted interpretation, deliberate or not, of the PAC Disciplinary Code.⁶⁰ During the exile period this tendency assumed serious proportions. It was sown and germinated during the Leballo era especially during the formative period in Maseru. It soon crystallised into a subculture within the organisation. Even after Leballo was deposed, it remained a fatal weapon in the power struggles, which characterised the operations of the PAC until it was unbanned in 1990. During the period 1962 to 1979, Leballo used the “internal enemy” allegations as a bulwark against critics and possible attacks. He felt vulnerable, given the kind of blunders he committed as head of the organisation, which cost not only people’s lives but damaged the reputation of the PAC as an organisation.

The March 1963 “press conference” in Maseru is an important starting point to an understanding of the birth of the internal enemy syndrome in the PAC and the divisive impact the syndrome had on the entire organisation. At the “press conference” Leballo revealed to the world that on a certain day in April, he would command an army of 15000 men trained in Basutoland and would invade South Africa. He declared that the people of South Africa were ready for such an uprising. Leballo made all these statements on the eve of the release of Mangaliso Sobukhwe, the founding President of the PAC, from prison. “The people of South Africa believe that the design of the press conference was to have Sobukhwe further kept in prison which took place soon after the fatal press conference, despite the fact that he had completed his prison term”.⁶¹ Many people inside and outside South Africa suffered when the South African government, assisted by the Basutoland police, arrested more than 10 000 PAC members or suspected PAC members throughout South Africa. These people were tried and convicted. The severity of their sentences was unprecedented in the history of South Africa. “These sentences ranged from 3 years, 5 years, 10 years, 15 years, 20 years, 25 years, 30 years and 33 years; life imprisonment was imposed on some and death sentences on others. As a direct result of the outburst more than 74 men have since been hanged by racists in South Africa”.⁶²

factional elements, no matter how important, should be chopped off without ceremony”. He also found loopholes in the clause about ‘Democratic centrism’. It is defined in the PAC Disciplinary Code to mean “that the power of directing the Pan Africanist Congress is centralized in the National Executive Committee which acts through the President who wields unquestioned power as long as he acts within the confines of the organisation’s democratic decisions”.

⁶⁰ Pan Africanist Congress: Disciplinary Code, p. 91.

⁶¹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: CJ Lekaje: “Confidential”, p. 2.

⁶² *Ibid.* p. 2; Also, see the speech of Dr M. Pheko, former PAC Deputy President at the unveiling of the tombstone of the Mpendulo sons killed in a raid on APLA bases by the South African Defence Force in

Against this background, it can be assumed that Leballo was insecure, about his personal safety and also about his leadership, stature and power within the organisation. Inventing the myth about an internal enemy was critical not only as a necessary divisive offensive, but as a weapon against opponents within the PAC. PAC members who were critical of the Leballo administration in Basutoland, “never had their grievances and complaints attended to in a manner befitting any well-run administration. Instead, they were given labels and tags implying that they were collaborating with the fascist government in South Africa”.⁶³ More often than not, such members would “just disappear” and the Leballo administration would spread rumours that these persons had deserted and had “gone back to their masters in South Africa”, because they were “political renegades who were South African police informers”.⁶⁴ Some of these members fled to other independent African states as refugees and others were alleged to have been “liquidated” by Leballo and Templeton Ntantala. However, certain members who incurred the disfavour of the Leballo administration, because they opposed the “liquidation” of other members, knowing what would befall them, left Basutoland, on their own, for Botswana. Whilst in transit through South Africa, some were arrested by the South African Police, convicted and given severe sentences. A case of one Qoba is singled out by C.J. Lekaje in his submission to the ALC of the OAU. This man, “on his arrival in Botswana found that the Leballo clique in Maseru had already sent messages to the representative in Botswana” to the effect that the people who had run away from the PAC camps in Dar-es-Salaam and Basutoland were South African informers and should not be given any kind of assistance.⁶⁵ “The representative in Botswana wrote to Dar-es-Salaam confirming receipt of the Maseru message. The Qoba group wrote to the National Executive in Dar-es-Salaam where they pointed out the atrocities that were being perpetrated in Maseru and requested to be cleared”.⁶⁶ This never happened. Instead, Qoba was arrested by the South African Police while en-route to Swaziland where he intended to seek political asylum.

In 1966, at a PAC camp in Mbeya, Tanzania, the PAC members raised their dissatisfaction with the leadership of the PAC. Instead of addressing the concerns raised at the meeting, Leballo once again emphasised “how he will deal with the enemies of the revolution who had infiltrated the party”.⁶⁷ Shortly thereafter, “three members of the PAC, among them an expectant woman, were declared prohibited immigrants in Tanzania and

Northcrest in Umtata, 1995.

⁶³ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: C.J. Lekaje: “Confidential”, p. 3.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* p. 3.

⁶⁵ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: C.J. Lekaje: “Confidential”, p. 3.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* p. 3.

⁶⁷ APLA Notes, 22 December 2000; See also PAC Archives: C.J. Lekaje – “Confidential”, p.4.

no reason was given for this (general opinion was that the leadership must have made such a recommendation)".⁶⁸

P.K. Leballo continued with his labelling and myth-making even after he was deposed. The latter section of this chapter will demonstrate how the internal enemy syndrome reached a climax resulting in open physical clashes and the shedding of blood amongst PAC members in what became known as the "November 1977 Coup d'etat", an incident which precipitated the downfall of Leballo.⁶⁹ In a press statement released from Libya in August 1982, Leballo continued, even after he was deposed, to label PAC leaders who came after him, i.e. Vusi Make and J.N. Pokela, as either conniving with "US Imperialists" or claiming they were "imported from racist Apartheid South Africa".⁷⁰

The management of funds and other resources

To a large extent, the financial problems which troubled the PAC during the entire exile period date back to the Leballo era. Even though Leballo "successfully" set up a formal PAC structure in exile, the co-ordination and management of funds (generated from various sources) remained a problem. It seems that there was no built-in mechanism or organisational capacity to deal specifically with the management of finances.

Initially, the exiled PAC received money from various sources including international solidarity groups, trade unions, the African Liberation Committee of the OAU, sympathetic governments and church organisations. As far back as 1963, Nana Mahomo, one of the two external representatives (the other one was Peter Molotsi) of the PAC, appointed in March 1960, received an amount of £100 from the KF and Metalworkers Union of Sweden to help the PAC meet the needs of refugees. The same month, Metall (a trade union in Sweden), agreed to purchase a Land Rover and ship it to the movement in Dar-es-Salaam.⁷¹ These funds never reached the PAC, so Mahomo was suspended in August 1964 and charged with misappropriation of funds, as this was seen as "attempts to create personal loyalties and sources of personal operation".⁷² This was not the only amount the PAC received from the Nordic countries. Between 1977 and 1992 the total contribution to the PAC was £24 million.⁷³ "In 1983 the Finnish government under the Social

⁶⁸ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: C.J. Lekaje: "Confidential", pp. 4–5.

⁶⁹ PAC Archives: TM Ntantala: "Crisis in the PAC", pp. 1–11.

⁷⁰ PAC Archives: Fort Hare: Press Statement by PK Leballo, Libya, August 1982.

⁷¹ Tor Sellstrom: Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, Vol. II, p. 500; Tor Sellstrom, Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa Vol. 1. p. 171.

⁷² T. Lodge: Black politics in South Africa since 1945, p. 309; Also see Tro Sellstrom: Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, Vol. II, p. 500.

⁷³ Tor Sellstrom: Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, Vol. 1, p. 498.

Democratic Prime Minister Kalevi Sorsa, as an exception, granted the organisation FIM 200'000 as refugee support in Tanzania".⁷⁴

This illustrates that it is not entirely true that the PAC, because of its Africanist stance "was not saleable to the Western World" and was therefore not able to get funding.⁷⁵ In comparison to the ANC, it received less, but nonetheless it did receive support from European countries.⁷⁶ As will be demonstrated later in the discussion, the PAC mismanaged its funds, misused its resources, i.e. human, financial and organisational and hence lost critical opportunities to make the kind of political victories or gains it was expected to during the long exile period. No attempt is made here to promote a narrow, internalist view of the PAC's problems, rather an attempt is made underline the fact that even though there were definite external challenges, the PAC leadership was to blame for a large part of its failures.

Mismanagement, misuse of funds and organisational resources was exposed by C.J. Lekaje, in his elaborate submission to the OAU Africa Liberation Committee. The points he highlighted were confirmed in a detailed report submitted by A.B. Ngcobo, the Treasurer-General to the Moshi Conference in September 1967. Unfortunately, oral interviews conducted during the research could not confirm the detailed financial issues raised in this report. The report refers first to the breach of article 4(e) of the PAC Constitution, which stated that "the National Executive Committee shall at the end of each year prepare estimates of revenue and expenditure for the ensuing year and that such estimates shall be submitted to the annual conference for consideration".⁷⁷ It proceeded to state, "the National Executive Committee shall at the end of the financial year cause the Treasurer-General to prepare and submit audited accounts to the National conference for consideration".⁷⁸

In the light of these constitutional stipulations, A.B. Ngcobo argued that the National Executive Committee had no grounds to request a financial statement from the Treasurer-General at the Moshi Conference, and especially given the fact that they failed to give him the necessary support as prescribed in the constitution. Ngcobo listed the numerous fund-raising missions in various parts of the world, which never reported the

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* p. 498.

⁷⁵ See D.B.A. Mahlangu: "From South Africa To Azania", p. 56.

⁷⁶ This is confirmed by T. Sellstrom: *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa*, Vol. 1, pp. 498–499.

⁷⁷ Pan Africanist Congress: *The Constitution of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, 1959, in Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukhwe, 1949–1959*; See also AB Ngcobo: Report of the Treasurer-General, Moshi Conference, September 1967.

⁷⁸ Pan Africanist Congress: *The Constitution of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania*, cited in the report of the PAC Treasurer General, 1967, p. 27.

funds generated to him (Treasurer-General), nor deposited the funds into the Party's account. To be more specific, the Treasurer-General pointed out that "in October 1964 a mission to the United Arab Republic (UAR) realised a sum of £5'000. This money was never handed to the Treasurer-General nor deposited into the party account. Neither was the explanation of its disbursement made available to the Treasurer-General".⁷⁹ This mission, was led by P.K. Leballo, the acting President of the PAC. Another grant was given to J.D. Nyaose (an amount of £10'000) in February 1965 following the PAC's first visit to China in July 1964. Again the amount was neither deposited into the Party's account nor received by the Treasurer-General.⁸⁰ The report proceeds to cite three more instances in which large amounts of money, donated by countries which were committed to the fight against Apartheid, and in support of the PAC, were either misappropriated or could not be accounted for by the leadership of the PAC. These involve £20'000 from the Chinese government donated to the PAC delegation, led by P.K. Leballo, with Messrs Z.B. Molete and A.G. Ebrahim. The donation was received in two installments of £10'000 each. The entire amount never reached the office of the Treasurer-General or the account of the Party. This was corroborated in a report to the ALC of the OAU submitted by C.J. Lekaje, in which he indicated that in August 1965, he went with Leballo to the Chinese embassy to collect a sum of £10'000 for the PAC. Lekaje signed for the money but on the way back, he was "instructed by Leballo not to disclose this to the Treasurer-General".⁸¹ By coincidence, Lekaje and Leballo met the Treasurer General at the bank and when he asked them what their mission had been, "Leballo lied to him and said the ALC had rung him so that he can arrange for an overdraft".⁸² In October of the same year, the PAC received another donation of £5'000 from the Chinese embassy in Dar-es-Salaam. The money was collected by C.J. Lekaje in the company of Messrs Raboroko and Ntantala. According to Lekaje's submission to the ALC, the two gentlemen "decided how this money was to be used" despite the fact that they knew that the organisation had a Treasurer-General who managed the funds of the organisation.⁸³

The labour delegation to China in May 1965, led by J.D. Nyaose, received an amount of £10'000.⁸⁴ This was subsequently the subject of great controversy between the union and the PAC, which led to Nyaose's expulsion from the Party referred to earlier on. It was

⁷⁹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: AB Ngcobo: Report of the Treasurer-General, Moshi Conference, 1967, p. 27; See also – ANC Archives, Fort Hare: The ANC of South Africa: The Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa: Whom Does It Serve? pp. 1–11.

⁸⁰ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: A.B. Ngcobo – Report of the Treasurer-General, 1967.

⁸¹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: C.J. Lekaje – "Confidential", 1967, p. 9.

⁸² *Ibid.* p. 9.

⁸³ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: C.J. Lekaje: "Confidential", p. 9.

⁸⁴ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: A.B. Ngcobo: Report of the Treasurer-General, 1967.

contended that the money belonged to the Federation of Free African Trade Unions of South Africa (FOFATUSA). All the same, the money was never reflected in the records of the PAC. In December 1965, Leballo returned from Accra, via Cairo, and gave a verbal report that the party had been given £5'000 by the Ghanaian government and that he decided to send it all by courier to Maseru.⁸⁵ He could not provide the proof requested by the meeting to demonstrate that the money was indeed couriered to Maseru and was received by the PAC structure there. Leballo further reported that he had collected £2'500 en route to Dar-es-Salaam and that he had given some of it to the cadres in Cairo and had paid his bill at the New Metropole Hotel. The latter sum he claimed was for the cadres in Mbeya to start their homeward journey. There was a further £5'000 from the ALC. About £2'500 of this money was dispatched to Maseru at Leballo's insistence. Another £1'500 was given to Ntantala to take to Mbeya. £700 was retrieved from the ALC money that had been left by J.D. Nyaose when he was expelled. All these transactions took place during the absence of the Treasurer.⁸⁶ In May 1966, the PAC received £1'500 from the ALC. About £350 of this amount was used as a deposit on a house in Livingstone Street in order to minimise costs on accommodation in Tanzania. This money was subsequently retrieved and the party continued to waste money on exorbitant rentals.⁸⁷

The list of instances in which funds donated by various countries in support of the struggle against Apartheid were either mismanaged or misappropriated within the PAC is stunning, appalling and, disconcerting.⁸⁸ Despite all these financial inputs from various sources, the state of finances within the PAC remained unsatisfactory throughout the exile period. What happened during the periods of Vusi Make, J.N. Pokela and J. Mlambo, is not explained in sufficient detail in the primary sources, but the PAC continued to have financial difficulties and the management and use of resources had not improved.

Mismanagement, recklessness and corruption were not limited to funds, but involved movable property acquired by the organisation as well. In December 1965, for instance, "David Sibeko drove a party vehicle whilst unlicensed and smashed it beyond repair. No inquiry was ever held. In August 1966 Sibeko drove another party vehicle whilst unlicensed and knocked down a pedestrian. The victim was hospitalized. Under mysterious circumstances the victim was reported to have absconded from hospital".⁸⁹ This created

⁸⁵ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: C.J. Lekaje: "Confidential", p. 9.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* p. 9.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* p. 9.

⁸⁸ See: PAC Archives, Fort Hare: AB Ngcobo: Report of the Treasurer-General, pp. 1–2; C.J. Lekaje: "Confidential", pp. 8–10; ANC archives, Fort Hare: The ANC of South Africa: The Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa: Whom Does It Serve? pp. 1–11.

⁸⁹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: CJ Lekaje: "Confidential" p. 5.

the impression, among PAC members, that the disappearance of the victim was deliberately engineered in order to defeat the ends of justice. David Sibeko continued to drive PAC vehicles without a licence, the leadership knew about this but failed to act. In another incident in May 1966, a PAC vehicle overturned about 8 miles out of Mbeya. "It had been driven on public roads for about three months after its license and insurance certificate had expired. The repairs of the vehicle came to £300. Because this accident took place when the vehicle was in the hands of the favoured group, nothing happened".⁹⁰

The amount of money donated to the PAC, which the organisation could not account for, is staggering and undermines the integrity of an organisation which started with a solemn pledge and commitment to serve African people. The fact that all the PAC leaders implicated in the report never repudiated its contents, instead agreeing to suspend the Treasurer-General, is interesting. It was decided to appoint a commission of enquiry, consisting of Z.B. Molete, J.D. Nyaose and P.N. Raboroko (who were all implicated in varying degrees in the maladministration of funds). This casts doubt over the integrity of the inquiry which followed. Nonetheless, the Commission of Inquiry was abandoned in 1968, because of the fears that should it investigate Leballo on the basis of the revelations made in the report of the Treasurer-General, members of the Commission might also be expelled from the organisation. The situation within the PAC, after the Moshi Conference, was summed up clearly by the *World Muslim News* in the following manner:

During the period leading up to Leballo's removal the entire situation within the organisation was characterized by virtual terrorism in the sense that some PAC members who owed personal allegiance to Leballo had been armed and were involved in acts of violence and thuggery against those who were regarded as not being loyal to Leballo.⁹¹

The end of the Leballo period

The legacy Leballo left behind was one of courage as was shown by the organisation's strong and unyielding commitment to the revolution. At the same time it is one of factionalism, cliquism and mutual political blackmail, particularly within the ranks of the leadership and the army. The army itself was deeply divided, to such an extent that during the post-Leballo era it was very difficult to unite the cadres. There were divisions within the PAC army, especially between the new cadres, mostly from the June 16 Soweto uprisings, and the old guard from the 1960s. This division worsened in 1977. In November 1977 Leballo instigated an uprising by new APLA recruits who lived at Itumbi Camp in

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 5.

⁹¹ *World Muslim News*, 7 May 1982.

the district of Mbeya in Tanzania. The coup was aimed against the APLA High Command headed by Templeton Ntantala, the Deputy Chairman of the PAC. It appears that there may have been competition between Leballo and Ntantala over the control of the army. Ntantala had the support of the old guard and well-established sections of the army. Leballo, on the other hand, had won the loyalty and support of the new recruits. This he did by frequently visiting the camp in Mbeya, making “inciting speeches there”, telling the new cadres that “he was giving them the right to go to Dar or Mbeya without bothering to get appropriate authority and that nobody had the power or right to stop them or refuse them permission to leave the camp. He then in subsequent weeks began drawing a few cadres to Dar”.⁹²

On a date unspecified (in the sources) in November 1977 at 2am, “a whole gang of new recruits attacked the residences of all the other Central Committee and High Command members”.⁹³ One member of the High Command was stabbed, others were manhandled and the keys to the High Command’s cabinets and offices were taken. The uproar which occurred during the fighting alerted the police, the Prime Minister’s Office (Julius Nyerere) and the OAU Liberation Committee. The interference of the OAU Liberation Committee and the Tanzanian government helped restore order for a short while. At a PAC meeting which involved the mutineers, a discussion about the removal of Ntantala’s High Command and its replacement by a new one was entertained. A decision was taken by the PAC leadership present at the meeting, to retain the High Command but the cadres rejected the decision. The Central Committee met in December 1977. The aim of the meeting was to mend the imminent split and develop a policy to manage the cadres. The meeting resolved that a consultative conference should be summoned in April 1978. A further Central Committee meeting was held in January 1978. The major aim was to prepare for the Consultative Conference in April. At that meeting Leballo surprised everyone as he made a ruling “that called for the final and total overthrow of the whole High Command, that is, Commanders both in Tanzania and out of the home front”.⁹⁴ This came as an instruction to the Central Committee. The decision was endorsed at the Arusha Consultative Conference in April 1978. T.M. Ntantala, the leader of the army, and a number of highly trained cadres were expelled from the PAC. They formed the Azanian People’s Revolutionary Party (APRP) on the 29th August 1979. This book, however, does not cover the development of the APRP and its activities. When Pokela arrived in 1981, he held a series of talks with the APRP assisted by Frontline States. He managed to

⁹² PAC Archives, Fort Hare: “Crisis in the PAC”, p. 2.

⁹³ *Ibid.* p. 5.

⁹⁴ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: “Crisis in the PAC”, p. 2.

persuade the APRP to dissolve as a structure and have its members returned to the PAC in 1982. The November 1977 incident marked the last straw of Leballo's dictatorship in the PAC as the OAU could not tolerate him any longer. Leballo was eventually deposed in May 1979.

Despite the issues already covered, it must be pointed out that there were numerous achievements which could be counted and credited to the period of Leballo's leadership. The establishment of diplomatic relations with China, was a result of Leballo's political maneuverings.⁹⁵ For a long time after Leballo had gone, the relationship with China proved beneficial to the PAC, especially in the area of the PAC military training and ideological strategy.⁹⁶ Besides that, a limited number of PAC men were sent to various places for military training: there were "about 30 in Nairobi, 20 in Addis Ababa, and another 15 scattered in about 4 or 5 African states. This does not include the more than 30 men in Botswana".⁹⁷ Some were in Europe (approximately 20) and over 100 in the United States of America. In November 1974, the PAC lobbied successfully and obtained the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations General Assembly. In July of the following year, the OAU Kampala meeting adopted, as official policy, a lengthy document prepared by the PAC in which it argued for the illegality of South Africa's international status.⁹⁸ Subsequently, Libya and Ghana offered the PAC training facilities, and 100 PAC cadres were flown to Libya for military training in the same year. In other words, even though circumstances were difficult in the PAC, there was limited achievement in certain areas.

On the 30th April and 1st May 1979, the Central Committee of the PAC held an extra-ordinary session in Dar-es-Salaam, at which it was decided to appoint a Presidential Council charged with the responsibility of fulfilling the duties of the Acting President. This structure superceded the Revolutionary Council set up at Moshi in 1968. Besides this, the PAC headquarters had been moved from Lusaka back to Dar-es-Salaam in 1971. Kenneth Kaunda was not prepared to host an organisation so deeply divided within itself, such as the PAC.⁹⁹ The appointment of the Presidential Council was ostensibly meant to cover the period when Leballo was going to be absent for medical treatment abroad. In reality it meant the overthrow of Leballo and the ushering in of a new era in the leadership of the PAC. The Presidential Council consisted of Vusi Make, David Sibeko and Ellias Ntloedibe, all of whom were members of the Central Committee. The trio, which was to lead the PAC after Leballo's removal from power, had the support of the Tanza-

⁹⁵ See T. Lodge: Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, pp. 308–317.

⁹⁶ See PAC Archives, Fort Hare: New Road Of Revolution, pp. 1–2.

⁹⁷ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: C.J. Lekaje: "Confidential", p. 7.

⁹⁸ T. Lodge: Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, pp. 305–317.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 303–326.

nian government and the Tanzania led OAU African Liberation Committee. In 1979 the Tanzanian government and the ALC were fully convinced of the centrality of Leballo to the problems of the PAC and they deemed it necessary to intervene in order to assist with the rehabilitation of the organisation. Hence, it was the Tanzanian government which announced, in the press and over the radio, that Leballo had resigned from the leadership of the PAC on grounds of ill-health.¹⁰⁰ This despite the fact that there was no letter of resignation from Leballo. Leballo tried to put up a fight for his position and indicated in a counter-statement that he never resigned from the leadership of the PAC.¹⁰¹ Fortunately, he was already out of Tanzania and the Tanzanian authorities would not allow him back into the country.

The intervention of the Tanzanian authorities in PAC matters and the removal of Leballo from leadership widened rifts within the PAC. The majority of cadres within APLA, most of whom were fairly new recruits who had joined the ranks of the PAC as students, who fled South Africa following the June 16 1976 Soweto uprisings, were still loyal to Leballo and could not accept the leadership of the above-named trio. It appears as though they saw in the leadership of the trio the usurpation of the party's constitutional leadership role, because the PAC constitution, as discussed in Chapter 1, did not make provision for an executive presidency.

The period of rule of the trio was very short and as a result can hardly constitute a significant historical period. Within one month, starting from 1 May 1979 to 1 June 1979, the trio's administration was already saddled with serious problems which culminated in the assassination of David Sibeko. The African Liberation Committee literally had to intervene and take over the management of the PAC until Vusumzi Make was formally appointed as the new Chairperson of the PAC in August 1979. Before examining the Vusumzi Make era, it will be useful to provide an overview of the circumstances which surrounded the death of David Sibeko and the trial which ensued.

The murder of David Sibeko

The murder of David Sibeko and the trial which ensued, exacerbated tensions and widened rifts within the PAC. At this stage it appeared that the organisation had reached a climax in the long history of problems it had experienced since its inception.

The murder of Sibeko occurred shortly after P.K. Leballo was declared to have resigned. The resignation was spearheaded by the Tanzanian authorities who played an

¹⁰⁰ World Muslim News, 2 May 1979; Interview with Mr E Mfafa; Daily News, Tanzania, 1 May, 1979.

¹⁰¹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Press Statement by P.K. Leballo, Tripoli, Libya, 25 August, 1982.

influential role in the ALC of the OAU. The decision to remove Leballo was apparently not accepted by the PAC army (APLA). The PAC army was not prepared to co-operate with the three-man Presidential Council. Groups of PAC soldiers from Southern Tanzania roamed the streets of Dar-es-Salaam, without authority either from the political leadership or the army's command. It is not clear whether the latter had lost control of the army or whether the army's command was covertly supporting disloyalty to the new Presidential Council.

The circumstances surrounding the murder of David Sibeko are ambiguous. From the reports of the trial it appears that he was shot by a PAC cadre called Titus Soni, alias Joe, a former bodyguard of the deposed PAC chairman, P.K. Leballo, on the 1 June 1979.¹⁰² This took place at the Sea View flats in the city of Dar-es-Salaam in the presence of Sibeko's colleague, Vusumzi Make. Six PAC cadres (including Titus Soni) from Itumbi PAC military camp, had travelled to Dar-es-Salaam to escort two of the three members of the Presidential Council to a meeting at Itumbi Camp. The meeting was called by the soldiers who wanted to discuss the internal situation in the PAC. It is not clear why the six men were armed and why they came late at night. These are the questions which Sibeko raised with them and in the ensuing scuffle he was shot dead. In a trial which took place in Dar-es-Salaam, the ambiguous position of Vusumzi Make, the owner of the flat, in which the murder occurred (in his presence), was raised as a concern. Apparently Make was not threatened or even forced to go to Itumbi camp by the cadres who shot his colleague, David Sibeko.

The case was tried by the Tanzanian court and a 15-year jail sentence was imposed on the APLA six for the murder of David Sibeko. On appeal the sentence was reduced to 10 years. The APLA six included Titus Soni, Daniel Monogotle, Gilbert Ntlapho, Abraham Tatu, Reuben Zwane, James Hlongwane and Shindo Mahlangu.¹⁰³ The funeral of David Sibeko and the imprisonment of the six cadres deepened the tension within the organisation. This provided space to opportunists within the PAC who began to cast themselves in a messianic role as saviours of the Party. Their actions dominated during the era of Vusumzi Make.

In summary, the problems in the PAC were of a longstanding nature traceable to the formation of the organisation in April 1959. Although Leballo's era left a shadow which continued to haunt the PAC after he was deposed, it cannot be concluded that for almost two decades, the history of the PAC revolved around the "personal imbalances" of one individual. "For one thing we can be certain: almost before the ink was dry on the docu-

¹⁰² Daily News, Tanzania, 1 June 1979.

¹⁰³ Daily News, Tanzania, 2 Feb. 1981; Daily News, Tanzania, Sibeko Court Appeal, 28/4/84.

ment signed in 1959 which created the formation of the Pan Africanist Congress, there were already signs of internal conflict”.¹⁰⁴ The number of expulsions from the organisation in the first month marked the beginning of a series of schisms as (elite) factions competed for control of the Party. From the thematic issues identified in this chapter, the contribution of the “Leballo factor”, in damaging the PAC in exile, is clearly exposed, without, however, absolving the entire leadership of the PAC and the ambiguous role of the Tanzanian authorities. The failures of this period were carried into the next phases of PAC leadership. Eventually when the PAC was unbanned in 1990, it was still recovering from deadly scars of the Leballo era.

The period of Vusumzi Make (1979–1981)

V. Make: Background and profile

Vusumzi Make, the Joshua Nkomo (of Zimbabwe) look-alike, was relatively unknown within the circles of the “traditional/longstanding” PAC constituency. During the time of serious conflict in the PAC in 1967–1968, his faction was small and relatively isolated.¹⁰⁵ Make had been a university professor. He taught at the University of Liberia between 1968 and 1974, when he rejoined the PAC in 1974. He had been a member of the PAC since the establishment of its headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania in 1964, leaving the movement during its crisis period in 1968. “Make’s golden opportunity to return to the PAC’s activities came when President Tolbert of Liberia permitted Vorster to visit that country in the 1974 “spirit of détente”. After this visit, President Tolbert engaged the services of Make to contact the PAC leadership and assured it that Liberia had not sold out, and that Liberia would go on giving increasing material support to the Azanian liberation movement”.¹⁰⁶ Make established contacts with Leballo and conveyed Tolbert’s invitation and assurances of continued material support to the PAC. Leballo, seeing the attractive financial prospects in the opportunity, immediately designated Make his Special Envoy in Liberia. “Thus, when Leballo finally went to see President Tolbert, and consequently collected some \$10’000 from the Liberians, Make was back in the centre of PAC activities”.¹⁰⁷ It is not clear what eventually happened to the money, perhaps only Make and Leballo knew. There was now satisfaction from three parties: President Tolbert was satisfied that at least the PAC, a member of the liberation movement, had not taken

¹⁰⁴ D.A.B. Mahlangu: *From South Africa to Azania*, pp. 81–82.

¹⁰⁵ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Feature: *South Africa*, undated, no page numbers.

¹⁰⁶ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: TM Ntantala: Profiles of the Leballo Gang, 1978, p. 22.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* p. 23.

Vorster's visit to Liberia amiss; Leballo was happy with the money and other benefits from Liberia and Make had derived, out of the deal, impeccable credentials for re-entry into the PAC. Ever since his re-entry into PAC exile politics, Make was wellknown for his tendency to save his skin and always played it safe in PAC crises and in the politics of the Azanian Revolution in general. It seems he was always careful to read the balance of forces and quickly determine where to stand.

When he was appointed Chairman of the PAC, with the backing of the ALC of the OAU, Vusumzi Make started his one-year-and-five months period of chairmanship (beginning in August 1979 to January 1981), from a very low point.¹⁰⁸ Firstly, he was implicated in the murder of David Sibeko. Ordinary PAC members questioned his role and asked why he was left out by the cadres from Itumbi Camp, if their mission was to eliminate the post-Leballo Presidential Council, as Make argued in his testimony during the trial.¹⁰⁹ Secondly, he was not known among the cadres in the army camps. The latter point was to be the major source of many problems he encountered during his short term of office. The support from the army was a vital area in political leadership during the exile period and especially in the PAC, where force and fear had become important attributes for sustained leadership of the organisation.

The composition and role of the exile leadership as represented by the National Executive Committee

Vusumzi Make's short period of leadership was characterised by "indecision, corruption, factionalism and cliquism".¹¹⁰ The extent to which many of these aspects were the result of a perpetuation of the recent Leballo era is easy to assume but difficult to measure, given the scantiness of documentary evidence covering this particular period. Existing evidence does, however, make clear that many of the organisational rehabilitation efforts, which J.N. Pokela developed when he took over as chairperson in February 1981, were initiated under the leadership of Vusi Make.

One of the first challenges Make's leadership had to deal with was the situation within the army. Members of APLA, who were still loyal to Leballo, some of whom were dismayed at the death of David Sibeko, refused to accept the Make led National Executive

¹⁰⁸ The recommendation of the Arusha Conference was that the title "Acting President" be designated Chairman of the Central Committee, see *PAC in Perspective*, Series No. 4, July 1978, p. 33.

¹⁰⁹ *Daily News*, Tanzania, 28/4/1984.

¹¹⁰ ANC Archives, Fort Hare (Howard Pim Library): Henry Isaacs: Memorandum: To all Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC, Re-Guidelines of the Department of Foreign Affairs, New York, 17 February 1982, p. 4. (Box 2: File no. 22)



Fig. 4 Vusumzi Make in Switzerland as guest of the Solidarity Group *Kämpfendes Afrika*, October 1980.

Committee.¹¹¹ It is worth mentioning at this stage, that in order to restore order within the PAC camps, the Tanzanian troops were deployed by the Tanzanian government. The Tanzanian troops were deployed to the APLA camp in Chunya where they opened fire on disloyal PAC cadres who were on parade, brutally killing eleven in cold blood and critically wounding more than forty.¹¹² The survivors were arrested, split up, detained and incarcerated in different towns in Tanzania. All this was done, rightly or wrongly, to assist the new regime and rehabilitate the PAC.

No major changes occurred in the constitution of the National Executive Committee during the Make era. At a plenary session held in April 1980, seven months after Make was appointed chairman, a few additions to the executive committee were made. These included, D.D.D. Mantshontsho, Count Petersen and Ellias Ntloedibe. Mantshontsho became Administrative Secretary, Count Petersen became Secretary for Education and Manpower Development and Ellias Ntloedibe, Secretary for Publicity and Information. Key members of the executive structure were:

¹¹¹ APLA Notes, Pretoria, 21 December 2001.

¹¹² *Daily News*, Tanzania, n.d. August 1979.

Vusumzi Make – Chairman
 D.D.D. Mantshontsho – Administrative Secretary
 Henry Isaacs – Director of Foreign Affairs (replacing the late David Sibeko)
 E.L. Makoti – Secretary for Defence
 E. Ntloedibe – Director of Publicity and Information
 Erret Radebe – Director of Finance
 N.M. Muendane – Member of the Central Committee
 E.R. Sibeko – Member of the Central Committee
 E.M. Zulu – Member of the Central Committee
 C. Petersen – Secretary for Education and Manpower Development¹¹³

The composition of the Central Committee became, however, a source of conflict within 12 months of the assumption of duties by the committee. The general membership of the PAC, through its committees and structures of representation, assured Make of loyalty and co-operation. To his dismay, when he addressed PAC members at Ilala Party residence, in Dar-es-Salaam (in his all-round New Year speech, 1980, of the Party), “all secondary differences that were there in the Leballo era” resurfaced. Questions and demands were raised and put before his leadership team.¹¹⁴ The PAC membership argued, “the leadership alone as an element in the Party cannot be justified to arrogate to itself a decisive role in the institution of the alternative to Leballo”.¹¹⁵ The PAC membership urged Make and his executive committee to drop two new members of the National Executive Committee, Mantshontsho and Ntloedibe, because “their role in the past twelve months was a manifestation of their miserable failures”.¹¹⁶ They argued that theirs were “neither mistakes nor deviations but utter failures”.¹¹⁷ They also demanded that they be involved in the future decisions about the appointment of people to positions of leadership in the Party. The same kind of demand for democratic participation in the election of Central Committee members was made during the era of Leballo and it continued to be made during the eras of Pokela and Mlambo.

The failures of Mantshontsho and Ntloedibe were not clearly spelt out, other than frequent reference was made to their historical roles and associations. The fact that Ellias

¹¹³ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/9: Minutes of the Administrative committee of the PAC, April, 30, 1979; PAC Archives: *PAC World*, Journal of the Pan Africanist Congress, n.d. p. 1.

¹¹⁴ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/9: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, 30 April 1979, p. 1.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 1.

¹¹⁶ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/9, p. 2.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.* p. 2.

Ntloedibe was once a close associate of Leballo was raised during what was supposedly the “new era” of reconstruction in the PAC. Ntloedibe was described as a person “who has a long history of opportunism” adding that his outlook was based on where his interests as a person lay.¹¹⁸ Vusi Make had to sift through all these generalizations and take a decision, which he failed to do. The criticisms were not limited to the two members of the executive he had recently appointed alone, they involved Fezile Ntlapho, a PAC representative in Egypt. The membership demanded his immediate withdrawal as he failed to live up to his responsibilities in Egypt. Criticisms were extended directly to Vusumzi Make as the Chairman of the party. The membership criticised him for not being fully resident at the party’s headquarters and consequently his unavailability when “the outside world and members of the party wanted to see him through correct channels”.¹¹⁹ Other issues raised were tacit criticism of his personal conduct and his failure to project a good image of the PAC in the media.

Other issues which the PAC leadership had to deal were raised by PAC members in the camps. These involved the coordination and management of the various departments within the organisation. Examples which were enumerated included the Department of Defense. The inefficiency of this Department was raised as a point of dissatisfaction. Besides the task of undoing the legacy and influence of Leballo in the army, training courses and military traditions brought to APLA by cadres trained in different parts of the world needed to be blended together into a uniform APLA tradition. This could not be done without the intervention of the PAC national executive committee. The PAC leadership, under Vusi Make, failed to revive diplomatic relations with countries such as Libya, which was of strategic significance to the PAC army. All these factors together made the relationship between the army and the political leadership exceptionally difficult.

There was dissatisfaction with the PAC Department of Finance, but this will be dealt with when the issue of finances, during the Make era, is examined. Another department singled out for criticism was that of Foreign Affairs, headed by Henry Isaacs. The PAC leadership was criticised for not assisting this department to develop a foreign relations strategy in line with the ideology of the organisation and following a strategy concentrating more on Western countries than on African countries. A request, though cast as a demand, was made that the office of Pan African Affairs be revived and more PAC missions be opened in Africa. Even though this made ideological sense in terms of improving

¹¹⁸ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/9: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, 30 April 1979, p. 7.

¹¹⁹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/9: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, 30 April 1979, p. 7.

the political image of the organisation, materially “it made little sense” as many African countries were too poor to provide the kind of financial support the PAC needed.¹²⁰

A long list of complaints was compiled and demands for immediate intervention were made with regard to the Department of Education and Manpower Development headed by Count Petersen. The main criticism and challenge centred on the lack of policies on Education and Manpower Development. The general membership of the PAC also criticised Make’s leadership for failing to step-up its activities in the Frontline States in order to recruit the kind of manpower needed by the organisation.¹²¹

Corrupt behaviour on the part of the leadership, including the chairperson himself, was raised by PAC members as a point of concern. This involved incidents of “excessive drinking and womanizing” at the Kijitonyana Residence which housed Central Committee members.¹²² Other issues which challenged Make’s leadership included conditions in the camps, (an issue which will be examined later in the book), and a lack of consultation and open discussion with members of the Central Committee. Most importantly, one of the points articulated in the document sent to the Central Committee to communicate dissatisfaction with Make’s leadership, referred to the PAC’s Constitution. The point made was that in 1959, when the organisation was formed, a constitution was adopted which suited conditions inside the country of a mass organisation operating openly. No provision was made for the army, since the conditions did not require that. The responsibility was therefore placed on Make’s leadership to look into the issue of revising the constitution of the PAC in order to suit exile conditions.

Coupled with the above-listed demand of the PAC general membership, was the demand for transparency within the organisation’s leadership echelon. The “secrets of the leadership” regarding the performance of its executive officials was challenged.¹²³ There was a demand for clarity on the core functions of each and every position within the Central Committee and that performance measurement and evaluation be done so that all those leaders who did not live up to their responsibilities could be identified and removed from the leadership structure.¹²⁴

All these demands pointed to a need to develop a well-functioning administrative structure within the PAC, to review the operations of various departments and create sys-

¹²⁰ APLA NOTES, Langa Township, Cape Town, 21 December 2000.

¹²¹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/9: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, 30 April, 1979, p.14.

¹²² *Ibid.* p.14.

¹²³ *Ibid.* p. 4.

¹²⁴ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/9: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, 30 April, 1979, p. 6.

tems which allowed for transparency and access to information. The issues raised were of grave critical significance, however no documented responses from Make's Central Committee addressing these were issued. Oral information gathered through this research could only confirm the negativity towards Make's leadership, which pervaded the organisation, but not the responses of the leadership to the critical situation.

The internal "enemy syndrome"

This kind of organisational sickness continued to manifest itself even during Vusi Make's short period in office. It took the form of labelling of opponents within the leadership structure as well as between the leadership and rank-and-file membership. One of the reasons, for instance, why Ellias Ntloedibe was among those singled out for criticism, ostensibly on the grounds of poor performance, was not only that he was a great "embezzler of Party funds" but he was also suspected of being "an enemy agent within the Party".¹²⁵ Unsubstantiated allegations, for example that the Botswana PAC was filled with BOSS agents, were rife during this period. This divided opinion within the Party. Ellias Ntloedibe was among the PAC leaders who flouted those claims to the point of irritating ordinary PAC membership who started demanding evidence and investigation of such allegations. What becomes apparent is that it was not his performance which was an issue but his involvement in the smear campaigns against members of the PAC, who were not in the Executive Committee. Vusi Make did not use this age-old Leballo weapon against anyone during his term of office. Perhaps he saw no need to do so as it was clearly pointed out in leadership caucuses, that "a new Son of the Soil has to be identified to lead the PAC out of the quagmire before it's too late".¹²⁶ He had little ambition for the position of Chairman of the Party. He knew that the PAC was looking for a new leader while he temporarily occupied the position. Hence, he tended to involve himself in his "own" businesses and was frequently absent from Party meetings.¹²⁷ On several occasions he was away from the movement, "making money for himself or acquiring more education in West Africa, Britain and United States".¹²⁸ It is not clear who funded his trips; was it the organisation or his own pocket? During the Pokela era, Make was investigated for the misuse/ misappropriation of organisational funds.¹²⁹

¹²⁵ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/9, p. 6.

¹²⁶ APLA Notes, Umtata, 23 June 1995.

¹²⁷ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, undated, p. 14.

¹²⁸ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, undated, pp. 7–9.

¹²⁹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee meeting, Dar-es-Salaam, December, 1–7, 1982, p. 2.

During this period, the internal enemy syndrome manifested itself in the form of ideological differences within the organisation as well. These started during the Leballo era in the mid 1970s, when the “New Road of Revolution” was adopted by the PAC Central Committee late in 1975. The “New Road of Revolution” was basically a rehash of Marxism-Leninism and Maoism adapted to the African conditions of the struggle for liberation in South Africa. It originated from the political education seminars held in the PAC military camps. T.M. Ntantala was instrumental in this initiative. The rationale for the “New Road of Revolution” was that “the external mission was in political decay, ideological chaos and organisational disarray”.¹³⁰ Therefore, there was need to shift the approach in favour of a “people’s war” by educating and arming the masses inside South Africa. Leballo was bound to pay lipservice to the “New Road of Revolution”, given his pre-occupation with power. During his time, because of the divisions which predominated during his period in power, splits along ideological lines were contained and were not as glaringly obvious as during the “liberal” era of Vusumzi Make.

Divisions between the “Marxist-Leninist-Maoists”, Maoists and “traditional Africanists” of the Sobukhwe days re-emerged.¹³¹ As a result, labeling and tagging tended to depend on where one stood in the ideological divide. Some of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists (who were regarded as ultra-left), broke away and joined with T.M. Ntantala who was expelled by Leballo at the 1978 Arusha “unity” Conference (in Tanzania), to form the Azanian People’s Revolutionary Party, whereas others remained within the PAC and were in many instances victims of persecution and disfavour in the organisation. The dominant ideological tendency in the PAC was “Maoist in outlook but Africanist in content”.¹³²

The impact of these ideological strands by the time Make handed over Chairmanship to Pokela in 1981, was that the entire organisation was suffering a two-way ideological split.¹³³ The notion of the “struggle of the Two-Lines, i.e. Revolutionaries versus Liberal Nationalists”, emerged.¹³⁴ Make was not able to traverse the ideological divide in the PAC, to rise above ideological labels and cast himself as a uniting figure. He was criticised by the general membership for his failure “to provide political and ideological leadership”.¹³⁵

¹³⁰ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Pan Africanist Congress of Azania: The New Road of Revolution, PAC Department of Information and Publicity, Dar-es-Salaam, 1975, p. 1.

¹³¹ Interview with Mr Gqobose, Port Elizabeth, 1 August 1996.

¹³² Informal interview with Malcom Dyan, Cape Town, 11 September 2000; also see T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, pp. 295–317.

¹³³ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: *Feature*: South Africa, unnumbered and undated.

¹³⁴ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC: T.M. Ntantala is Gone; But his ideas will conquer, Azanian People’s Revolutionary Party, Zimbabwe, undated, p. 2.

¹³⁵ PAC Archives. Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/9: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, 30 April, 1979, p. 6.

The management, use of funds and other resources

The management of funds within the PAC did not improve during the Vusi Make era. A department of Finance, established to deal specifically with the management and use of organisational funds, was both chaotic and dysfunctional. It operated under the most mysterious circumstances with only one Director who seemed to be doing everything from banking, withdrawals, acting as cashier and auditing. It had no structure and the only other two people involved, besides the Director, were Mgweba and Tsietsi. Their main functions, besides handling petty cash and entry books, were never defined.¹³⁶

Consequently, the list of demands from the general membership of the PAC to the Central Committee included the following:

- “How much the party had in its bank account;
- What were the sources of funding for the organisation;
- How were the funds divided and used for the various departments or how the decentralisation was supposed to function;
- How the Department of Finance raised funds other than those from existing resources;
- How the party representatives abroad coordinated with the Department of Finance and how much control the Director of Finance had over funds that came or were raised by PAC offices abroad;
- Whether the Department of Finance was helping the families of PAC members who were breadwinners and have in one way or other been victims of the Apartheid government in South Africa because of involvement in PAC activities;
- Whether the various departments had a right to organise funds for their exclusive use”.¹³⁷

All these problems, as indicated in the questions raised above, stemmed from the chaos which dominated the Leballo era. The leadership of the PAC, under Vusi Make, was not capable of solving the problems or implementing recommendations made by the general membership of the PAC. The Party missions and representatives continued to supply the Headquarters with money, instead of the reverse happening, and the up-to-date reports on the usage of funds by the overseas missions were not provided to the executive nor to the general membership of the organisation. Funds collected by representatives in the various regions of Africa were still unaccounted for and were never directed to the headquarters.

¹³⁶ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, undated, p. 6.

¹³⁷ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, undated, pp. 10–11.

The recommendations, which came from within the PAC itself, were sound and useful if they were implemented. They included recommendations for a more pro-active role for the Director of Finance in identifying institutions that are likely to support the programs of the PAC and suggested he should start going on fund-raising trips.¹³⁸ A further suggestion was that the Finance Department should create a Finance Committee, under the Chairmanship of the Director, to help with the organisation and management of funds. The Committee would advise other departments how to manage their monies and compile financial reports. The Central Committee was urged to assist the Department of Finance develop policies (and ensure that they were adhered to) in order to prevent interference and confusion where financial matters were concerned. It was recommended that the Director of Finance should focus more on matters of strategy and restructuring of the Finance Department than on mundane tasks which could be done by cashiers or ordinary staff. These recommendations fell on deaf ears, not only because Make was not receptive to them, but because the attitude of the Director of Finance was an issue. His understanding of the party's policies, ideological stance and programs was limited.

The misuse of organisational resources, especially vehicles, continued during this period. Some were driven without insurance and in some instances were abused by officials who allegedly got drunk during working hours. A recommendation was made by members of the Party, that in order to "regulate and control all Party vehicles in the headquarters" there was a need to appoint a transport officer who would work under the supervision of the Chief Representative in Tanzania.¹³⁹ A logbook system, to monitor the movement of all party vehicles, was suggested.

Surprisingly, the leadership of the PAC acted on none of these suggestions during this period and the same recommendations were made when Nyathi Pokela was elected Chairman of the organisation in February 1981. The question arises whether these anomalies were deliberately left unresolved, and in a sense perpetuated, because they benefited the leadership of the PAC or some individuals within it, or was it simply a question of incapacity and ineptness on the part of the leadership of the organisation? As the Vusi Make phase approached its end, "rather than there be direction, organisation and cohesion" the Central Committee of the PAC under his leadership became even more indecisive and was perceived as corrupt, as was suggested by the inability of the Director of Finance to account for almost a quarter of a million dollars which disappeared from the funds of the organisation.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Minute of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, undated, pp. 10–11.

¹³⁹ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, 30 April, 1979, p. 15.

¹⁴⁰ ANC Archives: Henry Isaacs: Memo - To All Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC, Re-

Factionalism, cliquism, mutual political blackmail and the formation of temporary alliances, based on expediency, dominated the ranks of leadership during the time of Vusi Make. His political wit and his tendency to involve himself in his private business away from the headquarters, created a chance for opportunists both within the ranks of the National Executive Committee and in the army. Make's weak leadership created an opportunity for the pre-eminence of what was called "militarism" in the PAC.¹⁴¹ This referred to the initiatives of the "cadre movement" in the organisation. Some of the cadres saw the divisions within the leadership, as an opportunity to gain positions of power within the organisation and the army. Hence, some of them tended to align themselves with one of the factions or cliques within leadership. Again, it was the members of the PAC army, who, on behalf of the general membership of the PAC, made a review of the 12 months of Make's leadership and demanded the immediate removal of D.D.D. Mantshontsho, as Administrative Secretary, and Ellias Ntloedibe as Director of Publicity and Information. Ultimately, allegations were made against four other members of the Central Committee, which the leadership agreed to investigate.

The lack of direction, from the Chairman of the Central Committee, was the outstanding characteristic of this period. Hence, the cadre movement seemed to have been more pro-active in terms of suggesting how the organisation should move forward. The point of concern was that the cadre movement "was not a homogenous movement". "Among them were very many opportunists who were exploiting the genuine grievances of the cadres and calling for the dismissal of the entire Central Committee in the hope that they would be given leadership positions".¹⁴²

In the long list of incidents of corruption, which were not investigated by the PAC leadership under Vusi Make, was the issue surrounding Mrs Elizabeth Sibeko (the wife of the late David Sibeko) and Leaseane Makhanda. The two senior members of the PAC were members of the Central Committee. A cheque of \$5'000 was stolen from the account of the PAC UN observer mission. Director of Foreign Affairs blamed the two ladies for this incident. This matter was brought to the attention of the Central Committee but no action was taken to investigate the matter further.¹⁴³ Serious personal struggles between Henry Isaacs, the Director of Foreign Affairs, on the one hand, Ike Mafole, PAC Chief Representative in West Africa and Mrs Sibeko, on the other hand, was a microcosm

Guidelines of the Department of Foreign Affairs, New York, 17 February, 1982, p. 4.

¹⁴¹ ANC Archives: Henry Isaacs: Memo – To All Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC. pp. 1–8.

¹⁴² ANC Archives: Henry Isaacs: Memo-To All Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC, p. 4.

¹⁴³ See - ANC Archives: Henry Isaacs-Memo: To All Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC. p. 5.

of the extent to which personalities, gossip and the “grape-vine” could distort the vision of a greater picture, and deflect focus from national issues to petty inter-personal squabbles. Underlying the superficially petty interpersonal relations were serious political agendas which involved scheming and jockeying for positions of power within the Central Committee.

Nevertheless, there were positive spin-offs for the PAC during the era of Vusumzi Make. Firstly, he lacked the demagogue stature and the self-imposing dictatorial predisposition of his predecessor, which, in one way or the other, was an advantage. It meant that ordinary PAC members were free, for the first time, to criticise their leadership openly without fear of suspension. In fact, it was during Make’s era, that longstanding grounds of dissatisfaction with the internal situation in the PAC were unearthed, confronted and propositions made for solutions. Make’s failures stemmed from not acting on recommendations and decisions of PAC leadership and his preoccupation with interests other than those of the PAC.

The failures of Vusumzi Make became the burden of the era of Nyathi Pokela. The fact that the ordinary membership of the PAC had enough time to ponder the problems of the PAC during the Make era, meant that the burden of expectation about what should happen during the Pokela era was high and somewhat unrealistic. These issues will be examined in the following section.

6B The Revival of the PAC: From John Nyathi Pokela to Johnson Mlambo (1981–1990)

The period of John Nyathi Pokela (1981–1985)

J.N. Pokela: Background and profile

John Nyathi Pokela, born in 1922 in Herschel, in the former Transkei, was one of the founder members of the PAC. In 1966 he was sentenced to imprisonment on Robben Island.¹⁴⁴ He was charged for his political activities in the Eastern Cape, especially for his role in the *Pogo* activities in 1963. On Robben Island he became well respected for his persuasive skills and his efforts to unite PAC factions in Robben Island prison. On his release from prison in 1980 he was propelled into the leadership of the PAC in exile as the “only person of stature available who had not been tarnished by the earlier internecine squabbles which characterised the leadership of the deposed and expelled former chairman Potlake Leballo”.¹⁴⁵ Vusumzi Make, the then chairman of the PAC, willingly stepped down at the end of January 1981, in favour of Nyathi Pokela, who assumed the reins of leadership of the party from the beginning of February 1981 until his death, after a short illness at Parirenyatwa Hospital in Zimbabwe. He was buried by the former President of the PAC, Dr Stanley Mokgoba, who, at that time, was the Bishop of the Methodist church of Southern Africa. Pokela was given a full state funeral by the Zimbabwean government as an honour for the good work President Mugabe claimed he had performed in uniting the PAC which was on the verge of complete collapse.¹⁴⁶

Pokela assumed the leadership of the exiled PAC following widespread dissatisfaction within the entire organisation with the former chairman, Vusumzi Make. The leadership of Vusumzi Make was characterised by “indecision, corruption and factionalism”, some of which were the relics of the Leballo era.¹⁴⁷ Pokela’s arrival in exile encouraged and inspired the majority of PAC members inside and outside South Africa. Talks about revitalisation and reorganisation of the PAC became rife. His arrival raised the morale of the membership and motivated many PAC members, who had either resigned or had decided to retreat to the margins, to return to the party and be active again. It was, however, a grave

¹⁴⁴ South African Institute of Race Relations: Survey of Race Relations, SAIRR, Cape Town, 1966, pp. 1–63.

¹⁴⁵ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Feature: South Africa, undated.

¹⁴⁶ Sunday Mail: PAC Freedom Hero Mourned, June 1985.

¹⁴⁷ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: World Muslim News, 7 May, 1982.



Fig. 5 John Nyathi Pokela in Zurich in November 1982 en route to the United Nations Organisation in New York.

mistake to assume that the generalised enthusiasm and euphoria would bring about reorganisation and reconstruction.¹⁴⁸ The PAC, with a past history “of disorganisation, chaos, anarchy and ineffectiveness”, presented a formidable challenge to Pokela.¹⁴⁹ He had not been thoroughly briefed about the status of the PAC in exile “where plots and intrigues, scheming and maneuvering among and within the organisation’s many factions” were the stock-in-trade.¹⁵⁰ The expectation that Pokela was going to be the “Messiah” of the PAC

¹⁴⁸ PAC Archives: Proposal for Organisation and reorganisation of the PAC, Dar-es-Salaam, 8 July 1981, pp. 1–6.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.* p. 1.

¹⁵⁰ See ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Henry Isaacs: Struggle within the Struggle: An inside view of the PAC of South Africa, unpublished Manuscript, London, 1986 (Box 4, File no. 75); also, M. Nkoana: Crisis in the Revolution, Mafube Publications, London, 1969.

was not met, but the basis for order and a sense of direction about where the organisation was supposed to go was laid. As Elliot Mfafa puts it, “at least Pokela, because of his stature, his dignity and charisma, the respect we had lost as an organisation was restored”.¹⁵¹ Henry Isaacs, in his “Memo: Re-guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs”: argues to the contrary, as he states that it was a “flattery” to expect Nyathi Pokela to be the “Saviour” of the PAC. He states that “no individual can save an organisation, let alone one with revolutionary pretensions. To say this is not to denigrate Comrade Pokela, or belittle the vital role that he has already played and the great contribution he has already made in a short time in effecting a certain degree of stability in the PAC”.¹⁵² A combined effort of the leadership and the membership was what was needed to bolster the initiatives and the vital role Pokela needed to play in reconstructing the PAC, but these were not forthcoming.

As discussed in the preceding chapters, the Pokela era will be examined within the confines of the three identified themes; i.e. the role of the leadership, the internal enemy syndrome and management and the use of funds and other organisational resources.

The composition and role of the exile leadership as represented by the National Executive Committee

Ever since his arrival at the PAC’s external headquarters in February 1981, Nyathi Pokela was surrounded by “all sorts of elements both in the Central Committee and among cadres who had been jockeying for positions of influence”.¹⁵³ Unfortunately, he was ill-advised and misled in a number of instances, as will be outlined in the course of the analysis of events.

Understanding the composition and role of the PAC leadership during this period is important. This section examines and takes, as a point of departure, the minutes of the various plenary sessions of the PAC, held in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, from February to December 1981; it focuses largely on the session held during the first week of December 1981. The PAC Central Committee met in November/December 1981 but the issues raised were only tackled at the plenary session which took place in December 1982. Between the dates of these important meetings, Pokela spent a lot of time focusing on diplomatic relations. He visited numerous countries to introduce himself as the new leader of the PAC and to mobilise resources for the PAC. Among the first diplomatic visits he un-

¹⁵¹ Interview with Elliot Mfafa, Kingwilliams Town, 26 July 1998.

¹⁵² ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Henry Isaacs-Memo: To all representatives and branches of the PAC, p. 13.

¹⁵³ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Henry Isaacs- Memo: To all representatives and branches of the PAC, p. 7.



Fig. 6 John Pokela addressing a leadership meeting in the PAC camp Chunya, Tansania. (no date)

dertook was to Iraq in June 1981. The outcome of that visit caused tensions and divided opinion within the leadership of the PAC. While in Iraq, Pokela openly expressed support for Iraq in the conflict with Iran, contrary to the official position of the PAC, which was the maintenance of “neutrality” in the case of conflict between two members of the Non-Aligned Movement. Shortly after the outbreak of the war between Iraq and Iran, “the ambassador of Iraq to Tanzania requested a statement of solidarity from the PAC in return for which he indicated that the \$50’000 which the PAC delegation had requested during their visit to Baghdad in January 1980 would be released immediately”.¹⁵⁴ This was a very difficult position for the PAC. From a practical point of view the PAC desperately needed the money to fund its operations and projects. On the other hand, the difficulty was that the new regime in Iran, as well as sections of the opposition within the government of Iran supported the struggle and the political case of the PAC. In addition to this, most exiled liberation movements openly opposed the Iraq-Iran war on the grounds that the war was not in the interest of the masses of the people in both countries. Moving from a purely pragmatic point of view, Pokela decided to issue a statement in support of Iraq. This proved to be harmful to the long term diplomatic interests of the PAC. Hence, at

¹⁵⁴ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Henry Isaacs-Memo: To all representatives and branches of the PAC, p. 8.

the OAU summit held at the end of June 1981, the full participation of the PAC was jeopardised. Besides that, the move alienated the PAC from some of its longstanding and vital supporters such as Libya. Libya and Syria supported Iran in the war against Iraq and the PAC had to take a stand in opposition to them. After this incident it became difficult to normalise the relations between the PAC and Libya.¹⁵⁵

The incident was not only a diplomatic problem for the PAC, it also became a bone of contention within the Central Committee, as opinions about the new chairman's wisdom clashed. A faction identified with Henry Isaacs and Mike Muendane, opposed Pokela's diplomatic moves in the Middle East as a display of short-sightedness and miscalculation, whereas the pragmatists within the PAC felt it was a risk which had to be taken given the practical financial constraints of helping the operations of the organisation to remain viable in exile. At any rate, despite the step taken by Pokela, the PAC had already incurred hostilities from certain quarters within the Middle East. At the United Nations, the delegation of Tunisia was, in most instances, hostile to the PAC on the grounds that the PAC received support from Libya.¹⁵⁶ What was evident from the above is that the PAC had not developed a clear strategy on diplomatic relations. Established relations with countries in the Middle East, for instance, were based purely on exploiting funding opportunities that existed, rather than on a long-term political strategy. This attested to the failure of Pokela's predecessors. The diplomatic arena became one of the challenges of his leadership.

His insistence that each department should develop a set of guidelines was an attempt to generate consistent policy standards. These were intended to solve, among other matters, PAC policy on foreign and diplomatic relations. The move was met with opposition among some sections of the PAC Central Committee, who saw it as an imposition that disregarded the preferred approaches of some heads of departments. Within the leadership, there were people who wanted to uphold the status quo, chaotic as it was, so that they could continue to exploit the opportunities resulting from a lack of clear and firm organisational policy standards.

An interesting question, at this point, is that of who constituted the leadership of the PAC during the era of Nyathi Pokela? The constitution of the National Executive Committee of the PAC, in terms of the calibre of its members, was important during the difficult moments of Pokela's leadership. He inherited an organisational structure with positions filled by individuals who were implicated in various acts of corruption. Most of them were not included in the new PAC leadership structure because they were under in-

¹⁵⁵ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Henry Isaacs-Memo: To all representatives and branches of the PAC, p. 8.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.* p. 8.

vestigation being carried out by a Commission of Enquiry headed by Pearce Gqobose.¹⁵⁷ The extraordinary Central Committee meeting of the PAC, held in Dar-es-Salaam in February 1981, decided to revise the structure of the Central Committee in a remarkable way. This later became the source of conflict at the level of leadership, as will be demonstrated later in this section. Key figures in the Central Committee structure, such as Vusumzi Make, were removed and replaced by new members. More people were added to the structure to make it more inclusive of all critical functions within the organisation.

Among the positions added to the Central Committee were those of the Chief Representative of the PAC at the Tanzania Headquarters, the Chief Representative to Guinea, (Vus Nomdolo), and the Chief Representative to Botswana. Replacement of some members of the Central Committee was recommended by the extraordinary meeting of the Central Committee in February 1981. Elizabeth Sibeko was removed from the Central Committee. A delegation of the Central Committee was set up and sent to the USA to explain to PAC supporters the reasons why she was removed.¹⁵⁸ The same happened with Fezile Nhlapho, who was removed as PAC Chief Representative in Cairo. New appointments, which were of strategic importance to the PAC, were made. Joe Mkwanaazi was appointed Administrative Secretary of the PAC, Gora Ebrahim was appointed Director of Publicity and Information and was made a member of the Central Committee, Ngila Muendane was appointed Director of Labour and Social Affairs and Thobile Gola was appointed member of the Central Committee and Acting Chief Representative at External Headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam. Benedict Sondlo who held the position of Administrative Assistant was appointed member of the Central Committee.¹⁵⁹

A few international appointments recommended by Henry Isaacs, the Director of Foreign Affairs, were ratified. These involved the appointments of Thobile Moremi as Assistant Representative in West Africa with special responsibilities for Gambia; the appointment of Nomakhwezi Ganya as Assistant Representative with special responsibilities for Switzerland and Austria; Sedibeng Shange was appointed Acting Representative in the Scandinavian countries; Dan Mdluli was appointed Chief Representative in Canada; Pul-edi Shoba was appointed assistant representative in the USA with special responsibilities for the West Coast and Vus Ndlovu was appointed assistant representative with special responsibilities in Texas and environs. Sipho Majola was appointed as Chief Representa-

¹⁵⁷ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee Meeting, External Headquarters, Dar-es-Salaam, December 1–7, 1982.

¹⁵⁸ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee Meeting, External Headquarters, Dar-es-Salaam, December 1–7, 1982. p. 1.

¹⁵⁹ ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee Meeting, External Headquarters, Dar-es-Salaam, December 1–7, 1982, pp. 1–3.

tive to the Arab Republic of Egypt and Mosoeu Magalela as Chief Representative to the Sudan with special responsibilities for the Azania Institute.¹⁶⁰ The former chairperson, Vusumzi Make, was appointed Deputy Chairman of the PAC in spite of the fact that he was still under investigation for the misuse of organisational funds during his tenure as chairperson of the Party. This created dissatisfaction among the rank and file membership of the PAC who questioned the basis of such a decision. At the very first meeting Erret Radebe, who occupied the position of Director of Finance, resigned on the grounds that he had been a victim of many accusations regarding the mismanagement of finances in the PAC. His resignation was accepted and he was immediately replaced by Themba Lawrence Mgwaba as Director of Finance and member of the Central Committee.¹⁶¹

At another plenary session of the Central Committee held in Dar-es-Salaam during December 1-7, 1981, additional appointments were made to the Central Committee. These included the appointment of Victor Sabelo Phama as Secretary for Defence, Zolile Hamilton Keke as Chief Representative to the United Kingdom and Ireland, EL Makoti as Director for Publicity and Information, to replace Gora Ebrahim who was appointed PAC Permanent Observer representative to the United Nations, Ike Mafole as Chief Representative to the United States of America and the Caribbean and Mlindazwe Nkula as Chief Representative to Iraq.¹⁶²

The structure covered a wide range of areas of diplomatic and strategic significance to the PAC. The only problem was that the criteria for making appointments were never clarified with the general membership and the cadres in APLA. They continued to question how certain individuals were appointed to the Central Committee. Therefore the rift between the leadership and the general membership of the party remained a problem, even during the most promising era of Pokela. He suggested a few drastic moves to close this gap and to reconcile the leaders with the general membership. These included monthly meetings with cadres; he emphasised cadres should be free to voice their concerns in these meetings without fear of victimisation. He suggested that a quarterly report on the activities of the PAC at home and abroad be produced and circulated to all branches. A Consultative Conference Committee was established consisting of the "Administrative Secretary, one Chief Representative, one cadre, each from Dar-es-Salaam, Bagamoyo and the Itumbi camp".¹⁶³ The intention was to call a consultative conference of all PAC struc-

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁶¹ PAC Archives: 'Minutes of the Plenary Session of the PAC Central Committee', Dar-es-Salaam, December, 1-7, 1981, pp. 1-3.

¹⁶² PAC Archives: 'Minutes of the Plenary Session of the PAC Central Committee', Dar-es-Salaam, December, 1-7, 1981, pp. 1-3.

¹⁶³ PAC Archives: 'Minutes of the Extra-ordinary Central Committee meeting', February, 1981, p. 2.

tures in exile and the internal underground. Most importantly, Pokela decided to set a date for the discussion of a Memorandum presented by the cadres to the previous Chairman in which the cadres listed their concerns and dissatisfaction with the leadership and the operation of various departments.¹⁶⁴ A concept paper, regarding the organisation and functions of the PAC officials,¹⁶⁵ prepared by a team led by Ike Mafole, was accepted by Pokela. The document responded to many of the concerns raised by the ordinary membership of the PAC. It will be useful to outline and analyse the concept document briefly as it formed the basis of the many changes Pokela wanted to introduce within the PAC. The intended reforms resulted in dissent within the ranks of the leadership, giving rise to numerous resignations. Unfortunately, primary documents do not present a full picture of the extent to which the reforms were carried out to the letter. Only a few changes are covered later in this section.

The reform document is entitled, “Proposals for organisation and re-organisation of the PAC”.¹⁶⁶ It identifies the lack of organisation as a major problem of the PAC in exile. It contend that the “starting point of the reorganisation process should be a clear definition or determination of functions and tasks of the existing departments or functional units. This should be based on departmental and organisational goals”.¹⁶⁷ The document suggests the need for the centralisation of the leading organs or departments within the PAC. Its conception of centralisation was premised on geographical and physical convenience. This means that the leading organs of the party were to be brought within the same geographical area or under the same roof or within a geographical radius that would facilitate or enable constant consultation between different heads of departments and the Chief Executive or Chairman of the PAC. It was assumed that this would enable the Central Committee to play its executive role of discharging the fundamental functions of planning, staffing, budgeting, coordinating, organising and directing. In practical economic terms this would assist in limiting expenses on air travel and telephone bills which had characterised the PAC operations at its headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam.

The document, however, suggests controversial arrangements, which placed Pokela in a difficult position when he started implementing them to the letter. These included the idea of strengthening the Chairmanship by conceding to it “executive prerogatives of demoting and dismissing unpopular, inefficient or ineffective members of the Central

¹⁶⁴ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/164/9: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, 1979.

¹⁶⁵ BAB Archives, Basle, Switzerland – PAC statement on decisions adopted by the central committee, in Bagamoyo settlement centre, July 21, 1983, explains numerous decisions made during Pokela's time.

¹⁶⁶ PAC Archives: Proposal for organisation and re-organisation of the PAC, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, July, 1981.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.* p. 2.

Committee”.¹⁶⁸ The Chairman would have the powers to reshuffle the Central Committee whenever the need arose. In addition to that the Chairman would have his “own staff which should constitute the Chairman’s inner circle or brains trust or advisers”.¹⁶⁹ All these views were adopted and an implementation schedule was agreed upon, despite the fact that the army and the rank and file membership of the PAC were not prepared to detract from the maxim they adopted during the era of Vusumzi Make that consultation at all times was a necessity, before major decisions affecting the organisation were adopted and implemented.

The problems of lack of discipline in the army camps, dissidence from within the ranks of the army, expulsions and resignations of key officials from leadership positions, emanated though not exclusively, from the programme of implementing these recommendations and proposals. Conflict and dissent manifested firstly from the ranks of the Central Committee. This is evident from the deliberations at the plenary session of the Central Committee meeting in Dar-es-Salaam, in December 1982.

From the outset it became apparent that there had been serious deliberations before the meeting to pre-empt its discussions and outcomes. What appeared like a faction within the Central Committee led by Henry Isaacs, Director for Foreign Affairs and Mike Muendane, former Chief Representative for the PAC in the United Kingdom, was at the forefront of challenging the decisions of the previous Central Committee meetings. They challenged the basis of the Central Committee restructuring which the Chairman wanted to introduce. They further invoked allegations of mismanagement casting doubt on the integrity of Nyathi Pokela.

The first issue to be examined was the recommendation that all heads of Departments should be based at the Headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam. Mike Muendane and Henry Isaacs opposed this decision and recommendation of the Central Committee on the grounds that “the work of the Departments is based on how it can be made more effective. This cannot be achieved from Dar-es-Salaam as one cannot be accessible while there”.¹⁷⁰ They argued that there was no validity in the assumption that the Central Committee would be more effective if all its members were based at the Headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam and that the accessibility of leadership to people from South Africa would be further limited because Dar-es-Salaam was known to the South African government as the Headquarters

¹⁶⁸ PAC Archives: Proposal for organisation and re-organisation of the PAC, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, July 1981, p. 4.

¹⁶⁹ PAC Archives: Proposal for organisation and re-organisation of the PAC, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, July 1981, p. 4.

¹⁷⁰ PAC Archives: ‘Minutes of the Plenary Session of the PAC Central Committee, Dar-es-Salaam, December, 1–7, 1981, p. 22.

of the banned PAC. The Chairman of the PAC retorted that the decision had already been taken by the Central Committee and he was merely confirming it at that particular meeting. Henry Isaacs explained their position even more emphatically, pointing out that the “centralisation of heads of departments at headquarters” would not make for better consultation and facilitation as there were already heads of departments at headquarters yet there was no consultation. He cautioned that the Central Committee was “riding a horse which” they would “not be able to control. He therefore requested that he be relieved of his responsibilities as Director of Foreign Affairs, the Representative to the United Nations and as member of the Central Committee”.¹⁷¹

Isaacs’ decision to resign did not come as a surprise to some members of the Central Committee. Joe Mkwanazi a longstanding member of the PAC National Executive, responded to Henry Isaacs’ statement about his resignation by pointing out that “whenever people expressed a different opinion” from Isaacs, he always threatened to resign and that had, in many cases, dampened the spirit of the Central Committee.¹⁷² Enoch Zulu, another a Pokela loyalist, supported Mkwanazi arguing it was not new in the PAC, that when a person was removed from one task to another, there would be dissatisfaction and threats of resignation. He indicated that incidents such as the refusal to cooperate with the Chairman of the Party led to the expulsion of the PAC from Zambia. Zulu suggested that it should be an accepted principle that if decisions were taken, the interests of the party and the revolution should be paramount and should supercede those of individuals.¹⁷³

The contention within the Central Committee did not end with the issue of the location of Headquarters. There was a lengthy argument about reshuffles within the Central Committee. The Chairman suggested a reshuffle of the Central Committee with the intention of intensifying the PAC’s programme of infiltrating South Africa, an escalation of APLA military action and establishing recognisable PAC-related activity inside South Africa. He suggested that Edgar Motau should be sent to Iraq, Sipho Majola to Syria, Nomdolo to Libya, Paxton Motaung to Conakry Guinea and Keke Nkula “assisted by Bassie and Jesus to Zimbabwe”.¹⁷⁴ Henry Isaacs and his faction within the Central Committee opposed this arrangement on the grounds that the Chairman seemed to have

¹⁷¹ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the PAC Central Committee, Dar-es-Salaam, December, 1–7, 1981, p. 22.

¹⁷² PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the PAC Central Committee, Dar-es-Salaam, December, 1–7, 1981, p. 22.

¹⁷³ Ibid. p. 23.

¹⁷⁴ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the PAC Central Committee, Dar-es-Salaam, December, 1–7, 1981, p. 21.

little knowledge of the performance histories and reputations of the people he was suggesting for critical leadership positions. They argued that in the case of Edgar Motau, the Chairperson had not taken into consideration his history in Addis Ababa and in Dar-es-Salaam. Representation in Iraq, they argued, required honesty and efficiency and they had reservations about the appointee as far as these were concerned. Isaacs' faction also criticised the Chairman's decision to appoint Gora Ebrahim to the United Nations and Ike Mafole to the United States. They emphasised their histories of failure in the various positions they had held before Pokela became Chairman.¹⁷⁵ A counter-argument, advanced by Pokela "loyalists" in the Central Committee, was that the very people who were basing their arguments against reshuffles on performance, were themselves not models of good performance, given their histories in the organisation. The fact that the PAC's UN mission was a one-man show was cited as an example of this. The arrogance and status consciousness displayed by Isaacs in the UN Observer Mission and Muendane's dealings with funders, independently of the instructions and rules of the organisation, were listed as issues which raised skepticism about their arguments in the Central Committee.¹⁷⁶

This situation within the Central Committee, led to another indication of intention to resign, this time by Mike Muendane. He requested the Central Committee to allow him time to complete the task he was given by the PAC, i.e. setting up a labour union and then be relieved of his duties as Director of Labour and Social Affairs in favour of Hamilton Keke. The latter had already been appointed to replace him as Chief Representative in the United Kingdom, hence Muendane was appointed as Director of Labour and Social Development. Muendane indicated that he was happy to serve as Chief Representative of the PAC and besides that, for health reasons, was not able to move with his wife to Tanzania. His resignation was not accepted by the Central Committee. The Committee indicated that PAC leaders should be prepared to take instructions and may not be deployed where they preferred. Enoch Zulu emphasised that "some Comrades have left their families" because the work of the party had to be done.¹⁷⁷ It was, at this point, that Muendane launched a series of accusations which cast doubt on the integrity of the Chairman. Firstly, he argued that the Chairman was not following the leadership "protocol" of the organisation. According to Muendane, the Chairman addressed a Trade Union Congress in Canada and made arrangements to make a follow-up on the meeting

¹⁷⁵ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the PAC Central Committee, Dar-es-Salaam, December, 1–7, 1981, p. 22.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 20–25; See also: ANC Archives: H. Isaacs: Memo: To all representatives, offices and branches of the PAC, Re-Guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs, February 1982.

¹⁷⁷ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the PAC Central Committee, Dar-es-Salaam, December, 1–7, 1981, p. 23.



Fig. 7 Zolile Hamilton Keke in Switzerland in late 1981.

with Canadian Trade Unions. Muendane felt he was deliberately sidelined and left out, yet he was the Director for Labour and Social Affairs. He indicated that the Chairperson had a clique in whom he confided and planned what should happen in the organisation. “Decisions adopted by the meeting had been discussed outside the meeting and Cde Mgweba was involved. Mgweba predicted changes and changes have taken place and here we are”, Muendane argued.¹⁷⁸ Muendane’s Central Committee faction contended that there was an “inner circle of the leadership” close to the Chairperson and that there were plots aimed at ousting certain individuals outside the circle.

The impression be derived from the scenario above, is that the root cause of problems during the period of Pokela, was his use of “old bricks” to lay the foundations of a new edifice. The tendency within the Central Committee of Pokela’s time, was to read the arrangements of the new era through the glasses of past experiences, whether deliberately or not. Pokela explained to the Central Committee what happened in relation to the

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.* p. 25.

accusations, which were leveled against him. His trip to Canada, where he addressed a Trade Union Conference, was not arranged by him but by representatives in Canada. In addition to that, Muendane was in West Africa during the time of the Conference in Canada. To echo the sentiments expressed by the Chairman, Mkwanazi pointed out that Muendane took no initiative to liaise with PAC representatives in Canada. Mkwanazi levelled a series of personal attacks on Muendane, accusing him of arrogance, of hoarding PAC monies in London and treating PAC members badly. He indicated that the only reason for Muendane's negativity to the discussions in the Central Committee meeting was that he did not want to move from the luxury and comforts of London. The same argument was used against Henry Isaacs as well.

It seems as if, during the exile period, there were positions in the PAC which were seen as "cushy" and, as a result, competition for them was fierce at leadership level. These included positions of the Chief Representative in the United Kingdom, in the United States of America, in mainland Europe as well as at the United Nations. This gave rise to serious battles when people had to be redeployed to other positions within the organisation. With the restructuring that Pokela implemented to revive the PAC, the issue of redeployment arose as the major bone of contention.

The importance of all this is that it shows how factional strife, which militated against all the good efforts of Nyathi John Pokela, emerged and unfolded. As Henry Isaacs correctly pointed out, "where factionalism and cliquism, plotting and intrigue, exist at the level of leadership, then it filters down to the lower echelons of the organisation".¹⁷⁹ This is a bit of an overstatement if one were to use it to characterise the era of Nyathi Pokela. Factionalism continued to exist, but it was more controlled when compared to the previous periods. In short, no concrete decisions could be reached at the December 1981 plenary session which had degenerated into chaos.

Among the important decisions that were implemented based on the deliberations of the extraordinary Central Committee meeting (February 1981), was that of the re-incorporation of the T.M. Ntantala group, expelled at the Arusha PAC Conference in 1978, into the fold of the PAC. This became an important landmark of Pokela's era. The widespread perception that he united the PAC in exile stemmed from this important intervention. This is summed up in a document entitled "*Work In Progress*" (WIP) in which it is stated that the "early 1980s saw greater stability in the PAC, with the low-key and modest John Pokela assuming leadership after a long prison sentence on Robben Island.

¹⁷⁹ ANC Archives: Henry Isaacs: Memo: To all representatives, offices and branches of the PAC, Re-Guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs, p. 7.

Pokela was able to bring Ntantala and the military breakaway back into the PAC fold”.¹⁸⁰ Pokela’s letter to the Zimbabwean High Commission in Tanzania also indicated that the problem of disunity with the APRP had been solved. “The spirit of Unity prevailed on both sides and made it possible to go thus far” and the PAC and the people of Azania would continue “to appreciate the comradely close relations with the people of Zimbabwe through their vanguard party ZANU (PF)”.¹⁸¹ For the successful re-unification of the PAC, which led to the dissolution of the Azanian People’s Revolutionary Party (APRP), Pokela received accolades from the Frontline States and the OAU, which had attempted for years to unify the PAC.

The reinstatement of the Ntantala group, within the ranks of the PAC, even though widely applauded, did not proceed without problems. Firstly, “certain individuals in the Central Committee and among the cadres” half-heartedly accepted the unity with Ntantala’s group because of fears that the expelled members, who had been in positions of leadership before the expulsions in 1978, might either demand their positions back or would be appointed to leadership positions again, thus increasing the competition at leadership level. The assurances made by T.M. Ntantala, the leader of the group, about their return to the PAC being unconditional, made little impression on the members of the Central Committee. After the integration, these people remained victims of what had been referred to in the previous chapters as the ‘internal enemy syndrome’. This will be demonstrated further in the following section.

The critical question, which emerges and should inform further research, is whether the leadership structure and personnel in the PAC’s Central Committee, as outlined in this section, had the qualities required to lead the PAC, given the critical juncture in which the organisation found itself. The organisation was at a critical point in the sense that there was a legacy of complete inefficiency and chaos which had to be turned around. Individual personalities brought complications to what can be referred to as the period of revival in the PAC’s exile history (i.e. 1981–1985), as did ideological trends and traditions within the Central Committee. Two diametrically opposed but complementary tendencies existed. The one was characterised and constituted by the actions of people who knew how to play it safe and “save face”. These people knew how to play the power game, shout the right slogans, carry favour with the right person or group so that they did not lose their positions or could be migrated to much better positions. On the other hand, there were those who were honest, not opportunist but loyal to the organisation

¹⁸⁰ PAC Archives: *Work In Progress (WIP)* (47): The Pan Africanist Congress, April 1987, p. 16.

¹⁸¹ PAC Archives: John N Pokela: The Pan Africanist Congress pays its compliments to you, Letter to the H.E. High Commissioner, Zimbabwe High Commission, Dar-es-Salaam, 28, Feb. 1981.

and its foundation principles. Pokela fell into the latter group within the PAC. The extent to which he was able to discern who was an opportunist and who was honestly committed to the revitalisation of the PAC under his leadership was a difficult exercise in which he failed. Other leaders in his situation might well also have failed given the slippery texture of PAC leadership politics during the exile period.

The most important initiative he could be credited with was that he initiated a process which led to the formulation of a leadership code of conduct for the PAC. The code of conduct, which did not supercede the Constitution of the organisation, was aimed at eradicating mistrust, mutual fear, group blackmail and even opportunism. It was aimed at “regulating relations between and among the members of the Central Committee and the delegation of powers in the event of the absence of the Chairman”.¹⁸² This code was formulated in stages. It was intended for implementation at the beginning of 1984. It is difficult to assess the extent to which the code was followed to the letter. A close examination of the situation at leadership level, before and after the death of Pokela in 1985, did not reveal signs of improvement.

Other important innovations of the Pokela period included the establishment of the Azanian Youth Movement as part of a Youth Secretariat, in the office of the Administrative Secretary of the PAC, the formation of the Unity Committee to work on unity with the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania to form a patriotic front, the establishment of the Azanian Trade Union Co-ordinating Centre, as part of the Labour Secretariat, and the establishment of the Research and Documentation Centre as a think-tank for the PAC.¹⁸³

The internal “enemy syndrome”

During the Pokela era, it is alleged that the internal enemy “syndrome” led to violence, amounting to human rights atrocities, especially within the ranks of the army and among the rank and file membership of the organisation. As discussed in the previous chapters, internal enemies within the PAC were usually identified on the basis of their previous histories within the organisation, close association with Leballo (the first Chairman of the PAC), ideological trends and even disloyalty to the dominant faction in the leadership of the organisation. The outcomes of the work of a PAC Commission of Inquiry, chaired by

¹⁸² PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/3: On the need of a new pattern and style of work; Rational use of funds and care of party personnel, 10 January, 1982.

¹⁸³ BAB archives, Switzerland, Opening remarks at the Plenary session held in Bagamoyo, 21–27 July 1983 delivered by John Nyathi Pokela, Chairman of the PAC of Azania.

M. Gqobose, in 1983, gave another dimension to the way the syndrome manifested itself during this period.

Ideological divisions within the PAC, resulting from the 1975 pronouncement of the strategy document, “New Road for the Revolution”, under Leballo’s leadership, persisted during the era of John Pokela. The latter was able to traverse the ideological divide and earned respect among the cadres, for his ideological sharpness and his understanding of the Marxist-Leninist- Maoist political tenets. Of course, the political education sessions on Robben Island during his 12-year prison term came in handy. His ideological acumen could have provided a central point of ideological convergence within the organisation. All the same, the divisions, labelling and name-tagging, on the grounds of perceived ideological orientation, continued to form the basis of serious tensions and division within the ranks of the PAC. The division between “traditional African nationalists”, led by A.B. Ngcobo and the “revolutionary Socialists”, led by the likes of Sabelo Phama, the Secretary for Defense, continued. After the death of Pokela and during the era of Johnson Mlambo, the tension eventually led to the split, by “African Nationalists”, who formed a short-lived forum called the Sobukhwe Forum.¹⁸⁴ This will be covered in the next section.

The significant role played by ideology in dividing the PAC into camps was emphasised by Benny Bunsec, a senior official of the PAC, when he argued in his letter to Henry Isaacs that, “the root source of the problem is an ideological and political one”.¹⁸⁵ He stated that it was a question of “a bourgeois versus a proletarian ideology”.¹⁸⁶ He gave the example of Hamilton Keke and Mkwanzu to illustrate his point that people talked radical ideology when they were not in positions of power within the organisation, but once they obtained positions in the National Executive Committee, they changed their language. The point which can be derived from Bunsec’s analysis is that the PAC members did not trust each other. The idea of an “internal enemy” syndrome was observed in the various phases of the organisation’s existence in exile. In most cases, the internal enemy was a question of perception. It was only in a few and isolated cases that it was it real.

An interesting case to analyze in this regard, is that of Henry Isaacs. He resigned from the PAC Central Committee on grounds which combined issues of principle, personal concern and power struggle. On personal grounds, what can be deduced from his writings is a sense of bitterness and hurt, based on the fact that he put in a lot of effort towards profiling the PAC in the United Nations (UN) and also in some quarters of the black

¹⁸⁴ APLA Notes, Cape Town, 15 December, 2000.

¹⁸⁵ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/77/23: Letter from from Bunsec to Henry Isaacs given to the Administrative Secretary by M Gqobose, Dar-es-Salaam, 1982.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

American community.¹⁸⁷ He then wanted to cling to the “fame” which he established, despite the reorganisation which the PAC wanted to effect. Besides that, being in the UN was a comfortable position and close to the real corridors of power, at an international level. As Director of Foreign Affairs, Henry Isaacs wanted to call the shots on all issues relating to the PAC and international relations, i.e. from appointments to the management of funds. In other words, he did not see himself as part of a collective leadership, guided by a chairman with superior prerogatives and decision-making powers. At another level, Isaacs’s decision to resign was based on principled grounds. When he resigned, he made it clear that he was not prepared to be part of the Central Committee until the organisation was restructured drastically and until a conference was called allowing for “a people’s leadership” to emerge.¹⁸⁸ Henry Isaacs was labeled in many ways by PAC members. He was referred to as “a revolutionary turned into an American government spy”, a “CIA agent whom history has exposed” and an enemy of the revolution.¹⁸⁹ The critical question is whether there was any substance to these allegations. The confidential letter written by Benny Bunsec to Henry Isaacs points to some of the relative merits of the allegations of an “internal” enemy, particularly in Isaacs’s case. Bunsec pointed out that reliable sources within the PAC indicated that they had seen a letter from Henry Isaacs to the World Council of Churches, advising them not to support the PAC. In addition, Isaacs gave evidence before a Select Committee in the US against the PAC. As Bunsec indicated “as far as I know the terms of reference of that Select Committee is to gather information about ‘communist subversion’ in Southern Africa”.¹⁹⁰ These issues, according to Bunsec, were serious allegations which if true, could completely discredit Henry Isaacs and his entire political career.¹⁹¹ What is illustrated here is that the internal enemy in the PAC was largely a figment of the imagination built on isolated but limited elements of truth. Oral information collected during the period of research, as well as primary documents consulted, provide no evidence regarding the alleged spying activities of Henry Isaacs. One informant noted that the main reason for Isaacs’s resignation was “hunger for power. He wanted the Chairperson to listen to him and act according to his plan. He wanted to manipulate Poks but Poks was firm and that hurt Isaacs’ ego”.¹⁹²

The group which suffered most from the allegations of the internal enemy were the

¹⁸⁷ See, ANC Archives: H Isaacs: Memo- To all representatives, office and branches of the PAC, re-Guideline for the Department of Foreign Affairs; See also, H. Isaacs: Struggle within the struggle – An inside view of the PAC of South Africa, pp. 1–36.

¹⁸⁸ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/77/23: Letter from Benny Bunsec to Henry Isaacs, 1982.

¹⁸⁹ APLA Notes, Pretoria, 21 December 2002.

¹⁹⁰ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/77/23: Letter from Benny Bunsec to Henry Isaacs, 1982.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² APLA Notes, Pretoria, 21 December, 2002.

former members of the Azanian People's Revolutionary Party (APRP). Surveillance of the former members of the APRP became the order of the day. The process of the integration of the former expelled members of the APRP was hampered by suspicions among PAC members, that the APRP had not really been dissolved and that its architects were simply adopting a low profile, biding their time to challenge the leadership. This was exacerbated by the rumours in Dar-es-Salaam, in December 1981 about the discovery or the interception of a document outlining the APRP strategy "for the seizure of the strategic leadership positions" within the PAC Central Committee.¹⁹³ When attempts were made to verify the rumours, there were vigorous denials from members of the Central Committee in Dar-es-Salaam. The reality of the situation was that the former Chairperson of the APRP, Mokoena, was found in the PAC camp reading "some very sensitive documents of the APRP which mapped out strategy and tactics of operation within the PAC and their home-going program objectives".¹⁹⁴ These were inflated within the PAC and resulted in witch-hunting and harassment of former APRP members. Some of them ultimately resigned from the PAC. T.M. Ntantala, the founder and leader of the APRP, who had been appointed Chief Representative of the PAC in Zimbabwe was removed from his position and ended up a refugee in Zimbabwe once again. He and a few APRP members, who decided on their own volition to leave the PAC, managed to secure a piece of land in Zimbabwe for subsistence. It was not long before the matter was resolved by Pokela's leadership. Ntantala was brought on board once again and was appointed PAC Chief Representative in Uganda.

The work and outcome of the Commission of Inquiry into the irregularities and corruption during the era of Vusumzi Make, provided grounds for the development of perceptions of internal enemies. Vusi Make, the Deputy Chairperson of the PAC under Pokela's chairmanship, was labeled an enemy agent. Reference was made to the way in which the PAC was bankrupted during the time of his Chairmanship and how he subsequently emerged "as a business tycoon".¹⁹⁵ This generated hostilities against him, especially from the ranks of the general membership and cadres. They were not only dissatisfied with his leadership between 1979 and 1981, but also suspected his complicity in the murder of David Sibeko. As a result of these rumours, Vusi Make was, for most of the time, absent from the meetings of the Central Committee. He deliberately chose to play a peripheral and almost invisible role because, as he argued, he wanted the Commission

¹⁹³ ANC Archives: Henry Isaacs: Memo – To all representatives, office and branches of the PAC.

¹⁹⁴ PAC Archives: APRP: T.M. Ntantala is Gone; But His Ideals will Conquer, p. 3.

¹⁹⁵ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee, Da-es-Salaam, December 1–7, 1982, p. 6.

of Inquiry to complete its findings and get his name cleared.¹⁹⁶ In his letter to the Commission of Enquiry and Central Committee, Make indicated that he would like to “place certain facts on record” and “to refute certain allegations and misinformation” but unfortunately, because of the financial constraints under which the Commission operated, it became difficult to get Make to appear before it and give his side of the story.¹⁹⁷ During the entire era of Pokela, Vusi Make remained in the shadows of PAC operations and was alienated from his comrades by the labels and name tags thrown at him.

The most violent outcome of the labelling and name tagging was that some people were killed because they were alleged to be enemies of the Party. From available archival information it appears, “more persons were murdered in factional strife in the PAC during the four years under Pokela than in 17 years under Leballo. Between June 1982 and January 1985 at least six persons were murdered, their physical elimination sanctioned or condoned by the PAC leaders who accused or suspected the victims of being “dissidents”.¹⁹⁸ The reasons behind the murders were all political and ideological. One case referred to is that of a certain Mahoyi, who was murdered in Dar-es-Salaam, on suspicion of continuing with the agenda of the APRP.¹⁹⁹

The problem with all the issues raised above is that they originated from a few sources and existing oral information does not corroborate them. Most of the interviewees contacted during this research were either evasive when these issues were raised, or they completely denied that they ever happened. Even if they happened, the question is who sanctioned these actions? One informant strongly argued that Pokela “cannot even be suspected of complicity in activities such as those, if they ever happened” and secondly “they would not have escaped the attention and investigation by the Tanzanian government which had established a special task force called Tanzanian Special Defense Unit to provide security for liberation movement personnel”.²⁰⁰ What discredits this view is the fact that Benedict Sondlo, an administrative assistant and member of the Central Committee,

¹⁹⁶ PAC Archives: V. Make: Letter to: Commission of Enquiry and Central Committee of the PAC, for information, London, 5th August, 1982.

¹⁹⁷ PAC Archives: V. Make: Letter to: Commission of Enquiry and Central Committee of the PAC, for information, London, 5th August, 1982, pp. 1–2.

¹⁹⁸ ANC Archives: H. Isaacs: The struggle within the Struggle: An inside view of the PAC of South Africa, p. 10; Also see PAC Archives: Report of the meeting of USA Chapter of PAC, held in New York on November, 30, 1985. None of my informants was in a position to confirm these incidents and they seemed not to be aware of the USA Chapter of the PAC. One argued that it might have been the formation led by ‘the bitter Henry Isaacs’.

¹⁹⁹ ANC Archives: H. Isaacs: The struggle within the Struggle: An inside view of the PAC of South Africa, p. 11.

²⁰⁰ APLA Notes, 21 December 2001.

was murdered in July 1984, in the PAC office in Dar-es-Salaam, by Pokela's bodyguard.²⁰¹ He had earned the wrath of PAC militants for being opportunistic and changing his tune according to who was in power. Pokela was aware of this incident, as Sondlo was part of Pokela's majority faction. The Tanzanian authorities threatened to close the PAC office in Dar-es-Salaam. The PAC persuaded the Tanzanian government to consider the incident as criminal and deal with Sondlo's murderer in accordance with Tanzanian criminal laws. The matter was accordingly dealt with by the Tanzanian authorities.

While Pokela made creative and honest efforts to bring stability and order to the PAC, there were attempts to undermine his efforts. Personal envy, mindless vengeance and vindictiveness, were all part of the elements, which made the internal conflict within the PAC complicated and even difficult to solve. This caused serious tension for Pokela, who shouldered huge expectations from the Frontline States, the OAU and the rank and file membership of the PAC, inside and outside South Africa. He was expected to get things right within the organisation. He succeeded in setting standards and procedures for running the affairs of the organisation, but failed to bring about internal peace and stability. Even during his time, the organisation was in turmoil. What was remarkable about his leadership is that he was able to manage the turmoil much better than his predecessors. The intervention by the Tanzanian troops and the OAU Liberation Committee, was limited and marginal. The PAC's internal problems were dealt with by the organisation itself.

Pokela re-organises the PAC

The 1981 concept document on the "organisation and re-organisation of the PAC" defined the parameters of the new regime in the administration of finance within the exiled PAC. The document pointed out that "the Director of Finance is in charge of all party property (movable and immovable) and financial resources. His major function is to organise funds for the party. In this respect he had to find various sources of funds, prepare the party budget and submit the party's financial statements at the end of every financial year".²⁰² In addition to this, the Director of Finance was also tasked to control the use of all Party resources. Given that these proposals were adopted by the Central Committee of the PAC, they became the framework upon which the management of resources and funds in the PAC was to be based.

The extraordinary Central Committee meeting, which Pokela chaired in 1981 on his arrival as the new leader of the PAC in exile decided, in line with the above-mentioned

²⁰¹ ANC Archives: H. Isaacs: *The struggle within the Struggle: An inside view of the PAC of South Africa*, pp. 13–14.

²⁰² PAC Archives: *Proposal for organisation and re-organisation of the PAC*, pp. 3–4.

proposals, to establish a Finance Committee. In addition to this it was decided that “all party funds would be divided as follows: defence 50%, administration 30% and publicity and information 20%’ (the 50: 30: 20 ratio)”.²⁰³ The use of Party funds was regulated in the sense that there were funds earmarked for operations, for humanitarian use (e.g. food, medicines, etc.) as well as administrative purposes, such as postage, telephones, etc. If funds were sent without specification, it was agreed that first preference should be given to “operations as that was the main thrust of PAC work in exile”.²⁰⁴ All funds according to this arrangement were to be handled only by the Finance Committee. In addition, it was recommended and agreed that “all representatives must submit financial reports and inventories of PAC property to the Director of Finance” on an annual basis.²⁰⁵

The picture, which emerged from the reports on finance and management of resources within the PAC at the end of 1982 revealed serious problems. Between March and November 1981, the organisation literally operated without funds, except for the amount paid to it by the OAU Liberation Committee. The co-ordination of funds from sources other than the OAU, was still very poor. An international organisation, International Defense and Aid Fund (IDAF), wrote to the PAC headquarters to inform them that they had donated some money to the organisation and it was received by Mike Muendane in England.²⁰⁶ When Muendane was asked by the Director of Finance, Mgweba to send the money to Headquarters, Muendane indicated that he had already distributed the money.²⁰⁷ Another amount of £15 000 is said to have been given to Muendane by donors in Europe and was not accounted for.²⁰⁸ The PAC Head Office had no control over how the money was utilised. The same happened with the amount of \$15’000 sent from Australia to Henry Isaacs. The latter never sent the money to PAC Headquarters and never accounted for how it was used.²⁰⁹ Another amount of \$15’000 donated to the New York office of the PAC to assist its Publicity and Information Department was never sent to the Headquarters despite many frantic requests for the release of the funds.²¹⁰ These incidents

²⁰³ PAC Archives: Decision and Recommendations of Extra-ordinary Central Committee meeting, Dar-es-Salaam, February, 1981, p. 3.

²⁰⁴ PAC Archives: J. Mkwana (Administrative Secretary): Letter to Comrade Sidzamba, 30 September, 1981, pp. 1–2.

²⁰⁵ ANC Archives: H. Isaacs: Memo: To all representatives, office and branches of the PAC, Re-Guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs, p. 36.

²⁰⁶ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee, Da-es-Salaam, December 1–7, 1982, p. 12.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁸ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee, Da-es-Salaam, December 1–7, 1982, p. 12.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

attest to why PAC internal publications, such as *Azania Today* and *Azanian Combat*, have gaps. They do not cover the entire exile period of the organisation. There were periods when these publications were not printed due to a shortage of funds. There is an abundance of these internal publications during the period starting from 1984 to 1990.

These irregularities happened despite the fact that regulations were drawn up at Central Committee level and PAC officials knew about them. The tendency to draw up policies and regulations and not adhere to them characterised the way the PAC functioned in exile. This situation did not improve even during the era of Johnson Mlambo. One of the reasons might have been that there were numerous precedents of this nature, which were known to the Central Committee, and for one reason or another were left uninvestigated. Isaacs, for instance, raised the issue about money Elizabeth Sibeko received on behalf of the PAC from the UN at a meeting of the Central Committee in February 1981. He produced detailed evidence of all the money paid to Sibeko and family by the Observer Mission to the United Nations during the period January to November 1980.²¹¹ The matter was not given the attention it deserved by the Central Committee of the PAC. If it had received serious attention, other Chief Representatives would have found moral significance and obligation to record and send the funds they received to the Headquarters. Besides that, even during the era of Pokela, the PAC had not identified the need to develop, update and monitor a database of its funders, hence it was not possible to trace the sources of some of the funds.

The Central Committee responded to these problems by emphasising the decision taken in February 1981 about the centralisation of control of all funds and other resources received by the PAC. The argument advanced by Muendane against the idea of centralising the control of funds was that offices in London and New York had expenses to be catered for. He wanted guarantees that when funds were sent to the Headquarters, their offices would be supplied with funds given the fact that besides paying for logistics such as water and electricity, “people also pass through these centres and need to be catered for”.²¹² Towards the end of 1982, the PAC received an amount of \$150 000 from Iraq. The organisation decided to invest it in property. Houses were bought by the PAC in Tanzania and also in London. The London house was mortgaged for 27 years. A car was bought for the organisation. In December of the same year the PAC received \$502’361 from the government of Nigeria. Two Swiss organisations, CERN and the Swiss Red

²¹¹ ANC Archives: H. Isaacs: Memo: To all representative, office and branches of the PAC, Re-Guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs, p. 28.

²¹² PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee, Da-es-Salaam, December 1–7, 1982, p. 13.

Cross, donated an amount of Swiss Fr. 50'000 to support PAC projects, such as schools and farming in Lesotho.²¹³ In addition to these funds, other donations received by the PAC, during this period, involved the support given to all the families of political prisoners, those detained and those executed, by the Holland based Azania Komitee.

The details of how these funds were used are not explicitly stated, save to say that greater allocations were to have been made to the military to assist the activities of APLA inside South Africa. An agreement was reached to deviate from the 50:30:20 ratio in favour of more support for the army and improvement of conditions in the camps.

However, there were still clear instances of misuse of party funds. The Director of Labour and Social Development in 1982 hosted a wedding reception using a portion of the PAC funds donated by the Norwegians. In addition to this, he made several appointments to his department without consulting the Central Committee.²¹⁴ Even though he was rebuked by the Central Committee for these activities, there were no steps taken to tighten control of spending by that particular department. During the time of Johnson Mlambo, the PAC still complained about financial mismanagement and poor recording of transactions. From the Leballo era to the Mlambo era, there was not a single instance when the PAC indicated that its finances were improving. This is despite the fact that there were always PAC officials who had enough money and thus could afford breakfast, lunch or dinner at the most exquisite hotels or restaurants. They could afford drinks (alcohol), evenings at clubs or at the beach, yet their organisation was pleading poverty. This raises questions about where the funds for personal or group luxuries came from when the organisation they claimed to be committed to, was struggling without funds.²¹⁵

Past trends and practices in the use and management of funds and other organisational resources, definitely indicate a marginal improvement during the Pokela era. At the same time, there is no doubt that the arbitrary manner in which funds were used in the past continued. The new systems and processes, which were put in place, brought about a certain degree of order, which even if inadvertently, opened new avenues of misuse and misappropriation of funds. Examples abound of departmental workshops which were claimed to have been hosted, but no reports were submitted to the Central Committee. It was a question of learning about the new system in order to be able to manipulate it in accordance with its rules.

It is clear from the issues discussed above, that the Pokela era was probably the most

²¹³ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee, Da-es-Salaam, December 1–7, 1982, p. 15.

²¹⁴ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee, Da-es-Salaam, December 1–7, 1982, p. 16.

²¹⁵ Interview with D.D.D. Mantshontsho, Umtata, 20 June 1995.

critical one during the exile period of the PAC. It marked the transition from the old way of doing things to the new; the conflict between entrenched leadership traditions and organisational culture and an ascendant but fragile outlook. On the whole the balance of forces between continuities and discontinuities favoured the former, and it makes sense to describe the era of Pokela as symbolising a besieged transition to the new era. What is most important is that during this period, systems and processes necessary to run the organisation were put in place, although not implemented, and for the first time the PAC developed a “programme” of action for each year. This became the tradition within the PAC leadership from 1982. The sudden death of Pokela, in June 1985 disrupted an interesting developmental process within the PAC which he had initiated and led. It became the challenge of his successor, Johnson Mlambo, to proceed with the programme.

The period of Johnson Mlambo (1985–1990)

J. Mlambo: Background and profile

Johnson Phillip Mlambo, born in Johannesburg, was one of the founder members of the PAC. “At a very early age he was chairman of the Daveyton branch, (near Benoni), of the PAC. In 1963 he was arrested and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment on Robben Island for sabotage and plotting to overthrow the South African regime by violent means. While on Robben Island he was tortured and humiliated but this did not dampen his commitment to the struggle for the liberation” of South Africa.²¹⁶ In 1964 his torture, which involved such inhumane acts as being “buried alive” up to the neck “and urinated upon by the sadistic white warders” exposed internationally the plight of political prisoners on the infamous Robben Island.²¹⁷ Such exposure before the General Assembly of the United Nations led to a slight improvement of prison conditions due to international pressure on the South African government. After completing his sentence, Mlambo escaped from South Africa and joined the external mission of the PAC, where he was appointed Secretary for Foreign Affairs, the position he held until the time of his election as chairman of the PAC at the extraordinary session of the Central Committee of the PAC on August 12 1985.

Isaacs describes Mlambo as “another Robben Island veteran” but “an unknown quantity”.²¹⁸ Isaacs further predicted that his tenure at the helm of the PAC was likely

²¹⁶ PAC Archives: PAC-Letter to Dr Ibrahim A Gambari, Chairman, Co-ordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Federal Republic of Nigeria, 12 August 1985.

²¹⁷ PAC Archives: Statement by Johnson Mlambo (Chairman of the PAC) to the 40th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, 28 October, 1985, p. 7.

²¹⁸ ANC Archives: H. Isaacs: *Struggle within the Struggle*, p. 58.



Fig. 8 Johnson Mlambo (holding a microphone) in Switzerland, late 1985 or early 1986.

to be inauspicious, given the kind of statements Mlambo made shortly after fleeing into exile. The references were about the statements he made to the Zimbabwean journalists when asked about the implications of the Nkomati Accord signed between South Africa and Mozambique in March 1984, where both countries undertook to prevent guerrilla operations against each other from their respective territories. Mlambo argued that the non-aggression pact did not affect the PAC because the organisation was inside South Africa. To Mlambo's political critics his statement was a sign of political naiveté given the broad implications of the Nkomati Accord for the liberation movements in South Africa. His statement was seen as symptomatic of the "self-delusion" which had plagued the PAC from the time of its formation; a wishful thinking about mass political support inside South Africa. To the PAC supporters, Mlambo's statement was "a tactical one".²¹⁹ It was an indication of a long term strategy which was to mark the period of his leadership, i.e. taking the PAC inside South Africa by establishing an active underground network and intensifying APLA military activities. Besides that, Mlambo's response was seen to be in

²¹⁹ APLA Notes: 22 December 2002, Umtata.

line with the PAC's strategy adopted in February 1984 based on the thesis of "an internally based and conducted struggle".²²⁰

Mlambo inherited a party with structures and relationships, some of which were working well, while others were not. Johnson Mlambo had a burden of expectations to live up to. His predecessor had designed a structure, conceptualised processes, organisational goals and priorities, but his untimely death meant that they were partially implemented. Mlambo was expected, in Robert Mugabe's words, "to pick up and sharpen even more Comrade Pokela's spear".²²¹ This was not an easy task for Mlambo, who lacked the political stature and admiration of African statesman, which Pokela enjoyed. As in the previous chapters, his tenure of leadership of the PAC will be examined along the three themes: leadership, the internal enemy syndrome and the management of funds and other organisational resources.

The composition and role of the exile leadership as represented by the National Executive Committee

During Mlambo's era there seems to have been little preoccupation with internal leadership squabbles. The major focus was on what was happening externally to the organisation. When Mlambo assumed the reins of power in the PAC, a number of developments were taking place within South Africa. The PAC leadership, in its quest for relevance, had to respond to these developments. These included the Sebokeng, Sharpeville and Boipatong uprisings of October to November 1984, as well as the Uitenhage funeral march, where a massacre occurred on the 21st March 1985.²²² These events attracted political attention nationally and internationally and focused political initiatives on what was happening in South Africa. This marked the beginning of serious competition among exile liberation movements for visibility and popular support inside South Africa. The ANC had responded to the developments inside South Africa since the 1983 tri-cameral elections with the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF).²²³ The left-wing political groups, led by the Azanian People's Organisation (a formation of the Black Con-

²²⁰ PAC Archives: Joe Mkwazazi: The Liberation Struggle in the Light of Recent Developments in Southern Africa, International Conference on Peace and Security in Southern Africa, Arusha, Tanzania, May 1985, p. 12.

²²¹ *Sunday Daily Reporter* – Harare, Zimbabwe, 21 July 1985.

²²² Truth and Reconciliation Commission Research Department: *Regional Chronologies – draft report*, 1998; PAC: PAC/Tan/85/1 – Letter from Johnson Mlambo to Mengistu Haile Mariam, Chairman of the Provincial Military Administrative Council, Ethiopia, July 1987. In the letter Mlambo requests for Training assistance for new recruits who had escaped from South Africa during the 1984 uprisings.

²²³ Indian and Coloureds (the minority ethnic groups) were allowed to participate in the Whites only Parliament, hence the term Tri-cameral Parliament.

sciousness Movement), formed the National Forum, which the exiled PAC embraced as articulating the aspirations of the “Azanian” masses and its ideological standpoints.²²⁴

Besides the developments on the homefront, Mlambo, as his predecessor did, decided to begin his term of office by consolidating relations with countries that had provided financial and material support to the PAC over the previous years. A month after his appointment Mlambo headed a PAC delegation to China, 22 September to 4 October 1985.²²⁵ After which he attended a UN conference in Paris and proceeded to Belgrade to attend the Party Congress of the League of Yugoslav Communists. Immediately after his return, he led PAC delegations to Uganda, Nigeria, Yugoslavia, Libya, Zimbabwe and Iran.²²⁶ He also undertook trips to West Germany and Sweden in response to invitations by support groups in those countries.

Mlambo headed a PAC delegation which met with the Group of Eminent Persons from the Commonwealth Secretariat in Dar-es-Salaam in April 1986. The Group of Eminent Persons had initially met with the South African government with the purpose of exploring grounds for the possibility of a negotiated political solution to South Africa’s problems.²²⁷ Mlambo expressed the position of the PAC on political negotiations in South Africa and the conditions which the broad liberation movement expected the National Party government to fulfil, in line with the decisions of the Commonwealth Accord in the Bahamas of the same year. These included demands that the National Party government should undertake to dismantle Apartheid, terminate the state of emergency, release political prisoners unconditionally, lift the ban on political parties and initiate the suspension of violence.²²⁸ The PAC’s position, as articulated by its chairman, was that it would support a peaceful transition on condition that the NP government was prepared to meet all the conditions laid down by the Commonwealth Accord, and that the basis for negotiations should be the principle of majority rule.²²⁹

After April 1986, Mlambo began to focus more on what was happening in the PAC, especially at the leadership level. Most of the issues he had to deal with and decide on were the result of processes initiated by John Pokela. One of which was the completion

²²⁴ See Pokela’s comments on Unity with the Black Consciousness Movement in PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee Meeting at External Headquarters, Dar-es-Salaam, December 1–7, 1982.

²²⁵ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/85/1: Letter from Johnson Mlambo to Mengistu Haile Mariam, 1987.

²²⁶ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/85/8: Report of the PAC Chairman, Johnson Mlambo, 1985.

²²⁷ H Adams and K Moodley: The Negotiated Revolution: Society and Politics in Post-Apartheid South Africa. Ball, Johannesburg, 1993, p. 3.

²²⁸ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/82/34: Johnson Mlambo’s address to the Group of Eminent Persons, Commonwealth Secretariat, London, 1986.

²²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 1.

of the work of the Commission of Inquiry into the mismanagement and misappropriation of funds during the era of Vusumzi Make. One of the persons under investigation was the Deputy Chairman of the PAC, Vusumzi Make, himself. The investigation by the Commission was hampered by a severe lack of funds. Its tentative findings implicated Vusumzi Make in the mismanagement of PAC funds, and the late Nyathi John Pokela had requested him to step down from the position of Vice Chairman, but allowed him, to remain as a member of the Central Committee.²³⁰ Mlambo had to ensure that this decision was carried out and communicated to the general membership of the PAC, who demanded that Make be expelled from the PAC. Other PAC leaders implicated in the mismanagement of PAC funds, and who were requested by PAC membership to step down, were Count Petersen, Edwin Makoti and Mike Muendane.²³¹ Muendane was later absolved on the basis of new evidence which was brought to the Commission.²³²

The Central Committee decided to suspend Make's membership of the Central Committee, not only because it was demanded by the general membership, but also because of his non-attendance of Central Committee meetings. "His failure to heed calls from the Headquarters and his activities which tarnished the image of the party" were raised as grounds for the suspension.²³³ Make had been requested several times to attend meetings so that the allegations made against him by the office of the President of Botswana (that he was involved in the selling of mandrax), could be discussed with him. Make never attended Central Committee meetings and continued to dispute the fact that he was ever invited to Central Committee meetings. The Chairman, Johnson Mlambo and Secretary for Defense, Sabelo Phama, were tasked to meet with him and discuss his position within the Party and the allegations made against him. The two were to recommend to the PAC Make's future status.

It is important to note that even though there seems to have been unanimity within the Central Committee about the suspension of Make from the leadership, there were some members who were still committed to him and continued to feed him with information on whatever decisions were taken by the Central Committee.²³⁴ Even though PAC members believed Make was becoming an embarrassment to the PAC, some were

²³⁰ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee, Dar-es-Salaam, December 1-7, 1982, p. 13.

²³¹ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee, Dar-es-Salaam, December 1-7, 1982, p. 1.

²³² PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/27/1: Decisions of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee held in Iringa, 1985.

²³³ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/27/; PAC/Tan/1/117/2- Letter from Zolile Hamilton Keke (PAC Chief Representative in London to Johnson Mlambo, 1987.

²³⁴ APLA Notes: Pretoria, 21 December 2001.

still loyal to him. Early in 1987, rumours abounded within the PAC of an “attempted coup to unseat the PAC leadership”.²³⁵ This was linked to a faction within the PAC still loyal to Vusumzi Make. Members of this faction were mostly “people with high educational qualifications, the so-called professors of the organisation”.²³⁶ Indicated to have been part of this formation was the late PAC stalwart and intellectual, Peter Raboroko. This rumour divided the PAC even further. The Mlambo majority faction argued, “one wonders why Vusi Make wants to be the captain again. When he had his chance he blew it. What fresh ideas for liberating Azania does he have”?²³⁷ What this shows is that mutual mistrust within the PAC survived well into the Mlambo period. When the ban was lifted on the PAC in 1990, its internal power struggles and divisions had not been sorted out.

Johnson Mlambo made new appointments and reshuffled the leadership. This happened against a backdrop of simmering discontent, firstly, about his own appointment and secondly, about the summoning of a consultative congress which Pokela promised to organise, but never did. Some members expressed dissatisfaction that the decision about whom to appoint as the successor of Pokela was made the preserve of a few selected Central Committee members, and never discussed, either at the full sitting of the Central Committee or at a general meeting of PAC members.²³⁸ This seemed to have been a tradition within the PAC, as it was the route followed by Mlambo’s predecessors. The fundamental flaw of not following the democratic process of gaining consensus from the majority was customary in the PAC, giving rise to leadership squabbles, disunity and financial mismanagement trends, which none of the leaders in the PAC were able to root out.

The leadership reshuffles and appointments made by Mlambo included: J.R. Moabi was confirmed as Secretary for Finance and L.T. Mgweba, Chief Representative in Iraq was to replace K.M. Nkula who was appointed Chief Representative in the London office. During this period the Mission’s name was changed to the United Kingdom and Ireland Mission. Hamilton Keke was transferred from the London office to Libya as Chief Representative and retained his membership of the Central Committee. Immediately before Keke’s transfer to Libya, the UK mission of the PAC was fraught with internal squabbles over how much direct authority the PAC headquarters should have over all its overseas missions. Vusumzi Nomdolo was deployed to Lesotho as Chief Representative to replace Mpazamo Yonna, who was recalled to the Headquarters. Ike Mafole was also

²³⁵ PAC Archives: Letter from Dan Mdluli to the Chairman of the PAC- Johnson Mlambo, 1 June 1987.

²³⁶ APLA Notes: Pretoria, 21 December 2001.

²³⁷ PAC Archives: Letter from Dan Mdluli to the Chairman of the PAC- Johnson Mlambo, 1 June 1987.

²³⁸ This is clearly articulated in the letter from Dan Mdluli – PAC Chief Representative to Canada, to Johnson Mlambo, 28 August, 1985.

recalled from the United States to the Headquarters to serve as Education Administrator and retained his membership in the Central Committee. Willie Nkonyeni was appointed as Assistant Chief Representative in East Africa, whereas Mike Diale was appointed Acting Chief Representative in France. Maud Jackson was appointed Chief Coordinator of Women Affairs with Joyce Sifuba as Deputy. Zakes Mofokeng was appointed as Labour Coordinator in Switzerland and Sydney Mabusela was to be Chief Representative in Syria.²³⁹ In the field of education, two new appointments were made. J. Vanda was appointed Principal of a school which was to be built in Ruvu Camp and B. Jordan was appointed as Curriculum Specialist. Elliot Mfafa remained the Head of the Department of Education and Manpower Development. Walters Toboti was appointed the Chief Representative of the PAC in Zimbabwe.²⁴⁰ Ramudi Maphai was appointed Deputy Chief Representative in Zimbabwe only in May 1987.²⁴¹ He was replaced in 1989 by Thobile Gola, who continued to run the office until 1992.²⁴² T.M. Ntantala (former leader of the APRP), was appointed Chief Representative of the PAC in Uganda.²⁴³ All other appointments in the Central Committee made under the leadership of Pokela remained unchanged during the first year of Mlambo's leadership. In 1987, Nomdolo was replaced as Chief Representative in Lesotho, by Rodney Funeka.

Besides the few reshuffles which were made, the composition of the leadership remained unstable until 1990, when a new National Executive was constituted under the leadership of Zephania Mothopeng and Mlamli Makwethu, both ex-Robben Island prisoners. The two stalwarts spearheaded the formation of the Pan Africanist Movement inside South Africa in 1988. The reason for the instability, at the level of the Central Committee during Mlambo's era, was the level of political blackmail and mutual mistrust within the organisation, which resulted in frequent resignations.

Having restructured the leadership committee of the PAC, Mlambo had to attend to the issue of the summoning of a Consultative Congress. This was delayed and serious preparation only got underway in 1989, on the eve of the unbanning of liberation movements by the De Klerk led National Party government of South Africa. The Consulta-

²³⁹ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/27/1: Decisions of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee held in Iringa, Tanzania, 1985.

²⁴⁰ PAC Archives: Letter from Johnson P Mlambo to Dr Witness Mangwende – Minister of Foreign Affairs Zimbabwe, 17 December 1985.

²⁴¹ PAC Archives: AG Ebrahim (Secretary for Foreign Affairs): Re-Appointment of Cde Ramudi Maphai as Deputy Chief Representative, 19th May 1987.

²⁴² PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/27/1: Decisions of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee held in Iringa, Tanzania, 1985.

²⁴³ PAC Archives: Joe R. Mkwanazi (Administrative Secretary): Letter of Appointment, to TM Ntantala, 24 November, 1986.

tive Congress was intended to derive a fresh perspective for the PAC, given the fact that developments inside South Africa were pointing towards the possibility of political negotiations. Secondly, it was intended to examine the constitution of the PAC as well as its administrative guidelines. Thirdly and most importantly, it was intended to heal the rift between the leadership and the army as well as the rank and file membership of the Party. The dispute between the leaders and the members was longstanding and was rooted in the traditions and practices of the organisation. As indicated far back in 1980, during the era of Make, the cadres and general membership wanted to be consulted on the appointment of a new leadership. This never happened, even during the time of Mlambo. This insistence on democratic participation continued to create an ever-widening rift within the ranks of the PAC general membership, resulting in Mlambo's attempt to speed-up the summoning of a Consultative Conference. An ad hoc committee, which consisted of Philip Kgosana (who had returned to the PAC on the eve of the 1990 unbanning), Sydney Mabusela, Ike Mafole and Moss Palweni, was set up. The preparations for the earlier Consultative Congress helped the PAC to focus on critical issues such as the composition of membership lists in PAC regions, branches, cells and the audit of party documentation.²⁴⁴ As a result of the preparatory work for the Congress in areas where there were no PAC branches, they were set up and elections conducted to appoint delegates to the congress.

The congress was finally held in 1990. Its major focus was not the Party's internal problems, but the prospects of a negotiated settlement in South Africa. This question divided the PAC into the left and the centre. The latter group advocated a moderate to pragmatic stance and the former emphasised a revolutionary path. It is the revolutionary route, advocated by the left within the Party (especially the military), which won majority support. The PAC's stance on negotiations thus reflected an element of hostility towards the idea of a negotiated settlement. Gora Ebrahim, the PAC's Secretary for Foreign Affairs, indicated that the PAC would not be found "even within the spitting distance of negotiations".²⁴⁵ The PAC's stance on the issue of negotiations was summed up by Joe Mkwana, the PAC's Administrative Secretary in his address to the International Conference on Peace and Security in Southern Africa. He stated, "No ruling group or class in history has surrendered of its own accord. It has to be forced to surrender. Moreover, for the national liberation movement to seriously enter into any form of dialogue or negotiations with the Apartheid regime of South Africa, it must do so from a position of

²⁴⁴ PAC Archives: Re-activation of Party Branches/Cells and Preparations for the Consultative Conference, 21 February, 1989, p. 2.

²⁴⁵ *Cape Times*, March 1990.

strength, and not one of weakness".²⁴⁶ As a result the organisation never participated in talks about talks between the ANC and the government. The PAC only joined negotiations late in 1993, and that was already late for the organisation to meaningfully influence the character of negotiations in its own favour.

The most important issue to draw attention to is that when the PAC was unbanned and participated in the 1994 elections, it had still not dealt with the turbulence of its past. Wrangles within its leadership, (especially the group from exile), were not settled. In 1989 the organisation had Mlamli Makwethu, a non-exile, as Deputy President and Zaphania Mothopeng (also a non-exile) as President. The period of transitional negotiations, covered in Chapter 9, imposed a new set of imperatives on the unbanned PAC. As a result little effort was put into healing the leadership divisions in the organisation. According to one informant, "the PAC needed a truth commission of its own before it could even participate in the 1994 elections".²⁴⁷

The most important innovation in the composition of the Central Committee, which occurred during the time of Mlambo, was the setting up of a full department on women's affairs. As far back as 1962, the PAC had a women's wing, which was a marginal operation in the political affairs of the PAC in exile.²⁴⁸ This of course, cannot be interpreted to mean that women were not actively involved in the politics of the PAC in exile. It was only in 1977 that the PAC women's wing seriously reorganised itself. This began with a series of seminars, the first one held in Harare in 1978 and the second one in Dar-es-Salaam. "Both these seminars addressed the issue of women squarely and came with recommendations".²⁴⁹ The most important seminar, of which the recommendations included those of the two preceding seminars, was held in 1988. It recommended that the PAC women's wing should be upgraded to a full department with a full-time secretary who should be a member of the Central Committee. According to the recommendations, a conference or seminar was to be held every three years to elect new office-bearers. In addition to this, a system of financial administration and guidelines, which facilitated accountability at regional and national levels, was to be established. The instability in the organisation is the reason why this matter was taken up ten years later.

The recommendations were approved by the PAC Central Committee in 1989.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁶ PAC Archives: Joe Mkwanzazi: The Liberation Struggle in the Light of Recent Developments in Southern Africa, International Conference on Peace and Security in Southern Africa, Arusha, Tanzania, May 1985, pp. 16–17.

²⁴⁷ APLA Notes, 22 December 2000, Cape Town.

²⁴⁸ Interview with Mrs Gqwetha (the wife of Sabelo Phama), 3 October 1995, Umtata.

²⁴⁹ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/159/12: Brief History of the PAC Women's Section, p. 2.

²⁵⁰ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Central Committee Meeting 18–24 September 1989, p. 1.

A structure of the women's department, consisting of 14 personnel, was appointed by the secretary for women's affairs and was ratified by the administrative committee of the Central Committee. The position of Chief Coordinator of Women's Affairs was upgraded to that of Secretary for Women's Affairs and Maud Jackson was appointed to this position. Mambhele Mfafa, the wife of Elliot Mfafa, was appointed Regional Coordinator for Women's Affairs in Zimbabwe. Joyce Sifuba was appointed Deputy Chief coordinator for Women's Affairs. These appointments followed the resignation of Fitho Ntantala, the wife of T.M. Ntantala, from the position of Chief Coordinator for Women's Affairs. The activities of the PAC's women's department were critical to the practical survival of PAC militants, especially during the late 1980s, when APLA began to make attacks, even though only sporadically, on the South African government. The women's department played a leading role in facilitating the implementation of development projects in the PAC camps and the improvement of living conditions in the camps.

Despite this initiative, the overall performance of the PAC leadership during the era of Mlambo did not significantly improve. Improvements were limited on the military front and the diplomatic front. The latter resulted in increased material support for the PAC.²⁵¹ The PAC leadership under Mlambo failed to build a popular image of the organisation and keep pace with political developments inside South Africa. The majority of ordinary members of the PAC felt that all Central Committee members "stand accused individually and collectively as leaders" for the failures and problems in the PAC.²⁵² Opportunism and incompetence at the leadership level still prevailed. This was demonstrated by the way the PAC was slowly losing ground to the ANC as the favourite and ally of ZANU (PF) in Zimbabwe. The attitude of the Zimbabwean government towards the PAC and the Black Consciousness Movement was becoming unfavourable during the last half of the 1980s. According to Mothupi, "the Zanu government seemed to have lost confidence in the PAC as a revolutionary movement capable of making a revolution, and they appear to have been taken for a ride by the ANC's imperialist sponsored publicity that they believe that the ANC is actually destined to take power in Azania".²⁵³ This shows that the PAC's diplomatic relations were weak in Southern Africa and the PAC cells, established during the Pokela era in the Frontline States had limited impact.

Another crisis occurred within the ranks of the leadership of the PAC on the eve of negotiations. The crisis germinated in the London and New York offices of the PAC. These offices had complained, since the time of Pokela, about what they saw as over-

²⁵¹ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/48/7: The Iringa Communique – 1987', p. 1.

²⁵² PAC Archives: Letter from Ezekiel K Mothupi to the Chairman of the PAC, 27 January 1987.

²⁵³ PAC Archives: Letter from Ezekiel K Mothupi to the Chairman of the PAC, 27 January 1987.

centralisation of powers by the PAC headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam. This involved the decision to centralise all funding. This meant that funds were to be distributed from the headquarters. In addition to this, some elements within the leadership detested the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist rhetoric which the leadership of the PAC and the majority of PAC members embraced as the ideology of the organisation. Some members of the PAC mission in London and New York, as well as some longstanding African Nationalists in Tanzania, led by A.B. Ngcobo, formed themselves into a loose-knit organisation called the “Sobukhwe Forum”.²⁵⁴ The Forum demanded the reinstatement of Africanists and PAC leaders who were expelled from the Party and advocated the return to the basic doctrines of Pan-Africanism as enunciated by A.P. Mda and Robert Sobukhwe. Their leading exponent inside South Africa was the late Selby Ngendane. He was gunned down, allegedly by APLA militants, outside his house in Umtata.²⁵⁵ The reason for the killing of Ngendane was the perception that he was very “dangerous because he was articulate, and if he had lived, the PAC would be upside down and the Forum would have taken over”.²⁵⁶ The reasons for the murder of Ngendane are difficult to verify from archival material, except for contradictory bits of oral information and newspaper reports on the murder when it occurred.

In summary, the leadership of the PAC during the era of Johnson Mlambo, did not resolve the problems of the PAC. The formation of the Sobukhwe Forum on the eve of the unbanning of the PAC meant that the conflicts of the exile period were transferred into South Africa. The non-exile membership of the PAC found itself caught in the middle and some made conscious choices to support one or the other of the factions among former exiles. In that way disunity within the PAC reproduced conditions for its perpetuation.

Management, use of funds and other resources

It is not clear whether the problems pertaining to the management of funds persisted during the period of Mlambo as it did during the previous periods. It is only implied in the complaints which were made by certain members of the PAC leadership. Before these issues are examined, this section will focus firstly on the main sources of funding for the PAC during this period.

Based on the work done during the time of Nyathi John Pokela, especially during the period July 1984 to September 1984 when the connections with the support groups in

²⁵⁴ PAC Archives: PAC overseas Mission; Interview with Elliot Mfafa (22 July 1998) and Peter Raboroko (July 2000).

²⁵⁵ APLA Notes, Umtata, 20 December 2002.

²⁵⁶ APLA Notes, Umtata, 20 December 2002.

America were strengthened, the PAC under the leadership of Mlambo, was privileged to draw financial and other material support from the Azania Support Committee in Toronto, and the Biko-Rodney-Malcom Coalition and the African–Liberation–Day Committee in the United States of America.²⁵⁷ In addition to support received from these organisations, the PAC received a grant of US\$ 26'000 in December 1986, from the Program to Combat Racism, of the World Council of Churches.²⁵⁸ In June 1986 the PAC received a donation in the form of clothing from Barbara Müller, President of Kämpfendes Afrika based in Zurich, Switzerland.²⁵⁹ In the late 1980's, the PAC-Swiss connection was vital for the survival of people in the PAC camps.²⁶⁰ In addition to these donations, there were regular contributions which the PAC received from the Afro-Arab Solidarity Group based in New York; China provided military support, scholarships for training at the military academy in Beijing as well as funding. In March 1986, the Chinese government donated US\$10'000 to the PAC delegation in Harare, Zimbabwe.²⁶¹ In December 1986 the PAC women's department toured Australia with the PAC Chief Representative in Australia, Maxwell Nemasivhanani. The PAC was able to raise \$10'486.²⁶² This was in addition to £15'000, raised by J.R. Moabi in his fundraising tour in the United Kingdom in December 1985.²⁶³ The amount was immediately dispatched by the Chief Representative to the PAC headquarters in Tanzania. This was an instance of a surprising improvement, something unusual to the PAC's overseas missions. Despite the regulations with regard to centralised financial control, continued non-reporting and non-dispatching of funds received from donors or raised through PAC cultural activities to the headquarters had unfortunately become the norm. The tendency among most of the overseas missions was to distribute the funds on their own, contrary to the standing regulations of the organisations. This tendency dominated the exile period of the PAC. It was predominant in the London and New York PAC offices. The amount raised through the PAC Australia tour was divided into two; \$4'000 was dispatched to the PAC Australia office and the remain-

²⁵⁷ PAC/Tan/1/43/23: Report from Dan Mdluli, PAC Chief Representative in Canada, to Central Committee of the PAC, August 1985, pp.1–2.

²⁵⁸ PAC Archives: Johnson Mlambo's Letter to James Mutambirwa, acknowledging receipt of the money from the World Council of Churches, 8th December, 1986.

²⁵⁹ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/81/10: A letter of gratitude from Johnson Mlambo to Barbara Müller, President of Kämpfendes Afrika in Switzerland, 1986; PAC/Tan/1/81/11: Letter from Barbara Müller to Johnson Mlambo about clothes to be sent to the PAC camps in Tanzania, 1986.

²⁶⁰ Interview conducted with Tekere, 1 May 2000, Cape Town.

²⁶¹ Tekere, one of the interviewees in this research, received his certificate in military science from the Chinese academy in Beijing in 1988.

²⁶² PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/41/14: Letter from Joe Moabi, Secretary for Finance to Maxwell Nemasivhanani, thanking him for the role he played during the tour to Australia by PAC Women.

²⁶³ PAC Archives: J.R. Moabi's Letter to Mkwanazi (PAC's Administrative Secretary), 3 Dec. 1985.



Fig. 9 Elliot Mfaza and Mfanekhaya Gqobose as guests of the Swiss Solidarity Group Kämpfendes Afrika in Zurich in June 1982.

der of \$6'000 was dispatched to the PAC headquarters in Tanzania. In addition to these funds, the PAC received an amount of US\$ 37'000 per quarter, from the OAU Liberation Committee, from 1964.²⁶⁴ This was in addition to the unspecified standing contribution from the W.E.B. du Bois Foundation in the USA.²⁶⁵

Inside South Africa, the PAC received a donation of an undisclosed amount from the All-Africa Teachers Organisation (AATO) in 1987.²⁶⁶ The money was derived from the pledges made by each member of this organisation to support the liberation movements in South Africa and Namibia. The AATO developed a fund for this purpose, the Liberation Movements Fund and was targeted to assist mainly SWAPO, the ANC and the PAC. The money from this fund was divided yearly among the three organisations. In the case of the PAC, the fund was aimed at manpower development within the organisation through focus on research, administration (i.e. the day-to-day administration of the PAC's Department of Education and Manpower Development), Publicity and Information, which involved planning and research activities to assist in the production of reading material

²⁶⁴ PAC Archives: Johnson Mlambo: Letter to Suppiah Dhanabalan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Singapore, requesting for additional funds for the PAC, May 1985.

²⁶⁵ PAC Archives: Johnson Mlambo's Letter to David G Du Bois, 27 June 1987.

²⁶⁶ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/101/8 – Report of the All-Africa Teacher's Organisation, 1987.

for the general public and members of the PAC, on matters associated with education and manpower development.²⁶⁷ A sum of Z\$ 145 was contributed by participants to each of the organisations and to the PAC, in particular, in Harare in June 1987. This was in addition to the annual subscriptions and donations from PAC members gainfully employed in South Africa and abroad.

Despite this income, the PAC needed more funds and prepared further motivation for funding which was sent to various countries, such as Singapore and Spain. A request for financial assistance was submitted to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Singapore in 1985. The PAC needed funds to assist the organisation's offices in Lesotho, Botswana and Zimbabwe.²⁶⁸ The request emanated from the realisation that the PAC's regular sources of funds, that is, US\$ 37'000 per quarter from the OAU Liberation Committee and US\$ 30 to 40'000 annually, was not sufficient for the overall administration and publicity of a national liberation movement.²⁶⁹ The PAC needed an additional US\$ 36'000, per annum, for each of the three offices. Alternatively, the organisation requested donations in the form of office equipment (e.g. telex machines) in order to assist in the smooth functioning of the organisation in countries such as Lesotho, Botswana and Zimbabwe. The other request made was to the Bishop Tutu Refugee Fund in the United States of America. The funds requested were to be used to improve living conditions inside the PAC camps especially at the PAC's largest camp at Ruvu in Tanzania.²⁷⁰ A similar request was made to the government of Spain in September 1986. The PAC requested a kombi for the organisation's Youth League, a kombi for the women's wing, a car for the PAC Chief Representative and clothing for the refugee community.²⁷¹ In 1988 the PAC sent J.D. Nyaoase, one of its founder members and veterans, to Switzerland to raise funds for the following projects in PAC camps in Tanzania: A children's home for children born of PAC parents and money for the building of a school (\$200'000), as well as the equipment and medicines for a medical clinic in Musuguru/Kitonga multi-purpose centre in Tanzania and assistance with food and clothing for refugees.

Even though it is not clear whether Nyaoase was successful in his endeavours, what needs to be underlined is that as Barbara Müller puts it, "the PAC in Switzerland was always embraced by solidarity groupings even if the financial contributions were not that

²⁶⁷ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/101/8 – Report of the All-Africa Teacher's Organisation, 1987.

²⁶⁸ PAC Archives: Johnson Mlambo- Letter to Suppiah Dhanabalan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Singapore, requesting for additional funds for the PAC, May 1985.

²⁶⁹ PAC Archives: Johnson Mlambo' Letter to Suppiah Dhanabalan, May 1985.

²⁷⁰ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/82/11 – Letter from Joe Moabi, PAC Secretary for Finance to Cobin Seavers of the Bishop Tutu Refugee Fund, in the US, 1986.

²⁷¹ PAC Archives: Letter written by Waters Toboti, PAC Chief Representative in Zimbabwe to the Ambassador of the Spanish government in Harare, Zimbabwe, September 1986.

high”.²⁷² According to the interview with Gqobose, the PAC was, in most instances, “lucky to get what it requested from most governments and organisations except in those instances where it had to compete with the ANC; the ANC would in most cases get the money alone or the PAC would get very little”.²⁷³

It appears therefore that the PAC was not without funds or donors. If one totals the amounts indicated above, it is clear that during Mlambo’s period alone, the PAC received approximately US\$150’000 from international organisations. Despite that, the PAC continued to plead poverty. From 1987, the organisation embarked on a programme of belt-tightening in order to reduce expenses. The organisation suspended all renovations and house improvements, all major vehicle repairs, all conferences paid for by the party, all student loans and weekly petrol allocations were reduced by “200/-ts per vehicle”.²⁷⁴ In addition to this, the planned visit by the PAC Secretary for Finance to the USA, the Caribbean and Canada, was suspended as part of the belt-tightening exercise. Some vehicles were grounded for almost a year and these included a Toyota Hi-Ace TZ 83078 and a Datsun TZ 71602.²⁷⁵ These arrangements lasted much longer than ordinary PAC members expected, they were reviewed every three months, even though the general membership was, in most cases, not consulted. It was also during this same period that the PAC developed stricter control procedures with regard to the use of vehicles. The tendency to misuse PAC vehicles was still on the rise and stricter control measures were needed to bring these practices under control. This tendency was more rampant in the PAC’s Publicity Department. Regulations, which were initially drawn up for this Department, were extended to the entire organisation. A small committee whose task was to regulate the use of organisational vehicles, was set up and Reggie Khumalo was appointed as its coordinator. The coordinator was to have “absolute control over both the driver and the car” and was “fully accountable for all its movements without exception”.²⁷⁶ The loophole, which the leadership of the PAC opened in the regulation, was that the use of organisational vehicles in social engagements, e.g. cinemas, outings and party receptions was not strictly forbidden, but was made subject to negotiations. This opened an opportunity for continued mismanagement of official vehicles. Fixing them was a huge cost to the organisation, hence the PAC had to con-

²⁷² Informal conversation with Barbara Müller, Basel, Switzerland, 13 October, 2002.

²⁷³ Interview with Mr Gqobose, Port Elizabeth, 1 August 1996; See also PAC/Tan/1/43/23 – Report from Dan Mdluli, PAC Chief Representative in Canada, to Central Committee of the PAC, August 1985, pp.1–2.

²⁷⁴ PAC Archives: Memo to All Heads of Departments and Staff, Subject-Reduction of Expenses, 1987.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁶ PAC Archives: Regulations governing the use of Publicity car, 4 October 1986.

stantly plead poverty to its funders till the time it joined the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa as a political party.

The internal “enemy syndrome”

As indicated in the previous chapters, the internal enemy in the PAC was constructed by factions within the organisation. It manifested itself as attitudes which determined intra-group cohesion and inter-group hostility. One was an enemy of the PAC, a “sell-out” or a spy as long as one was outside a particular faction or ideological tradition. In most instances there was hardly a grain of truth in the internal enemy allegations, but in other instances, the allegations had a limited element of truth.

Labelling and name-tagging started during the Leballo era and continued into the leadership period of Mlambo. During this period it contained serious ideological elements. Underlying the ideological issues were power struggles based on the control of party funds, gossip and rumour mongering. The most interesting instance was in the PAC London office. This particular office was run for a long time by MikMuendane. Even after the reshuffles made by Pokela, which saw Muendane being shifted to the portfolio of Secretary for Labour, the latter continued to have an influence on what was happening in the PAC in the United Kingdom. This culminated in his suspension from the Central Committee on the 19th March 1987 and the Department of Labour was temporarily placed under the office of the Chairman until September of that year when Elizabeth Sibeko was appointed as Secretary for Labour and member of the Central Co.²⁷⁷ Muendane was not only suspended from the Central Committee, he was also suspended from all activities of the PAC for a period of twelve months from the 13th of April 1987. As indicated in the letter from Joe Mkwanazi, to Herbart Ruitenberg of the Netherlands, “no matter how unpleasant it was to take such a deci, it had to be done in the interest of the struggle.”²⁷⁸

The suspension of Muendane evoked wide and simmering discontent within the PAC. Issues of ideology combined with questions around the Central Committee’s disciplinary procedures and the unfairness of suspension of a number of PAC stalwarts, which occurred in the past laid the foundation for a new split within the organisation. It appears

²⁷⁷ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/83.56: Letter from Joe Mkwanazi to Mike Ngila Muendane, 1987; PAC/Tan/1/83/61 – Letter from Joe Mkwanazi to Mr John B. Seal, Director of the International Labour Organisation, September 1987; PAC/Tan/1/83/62: Letter to Joe Mkwanazi from the International Labour Organisation, September 1987.

²⁷⁸ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/83/30 – Letter from Joe Mkwanazi to Herbart Ruitenberg, Netherlands, 1987.

that the suspension of Mike Muendane and other stalwarts became an additional factor which inspired groups of Africanists in London, Dar-es-Salaam and the United States of America to come together and form themselves into the “Sobukhwe Forum”. The Forum was not intended to be an organisation outside the PAC. It was to be an internal lobby group within the PAC whose aim was to take over the leadership of the organisation. The Forum invoked issues of ideology as justification for their existence. In addition, the members of the Forum also raised issues of political alliances with organisations such as the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCMA) and its internal (inside South Africa) organ, the Azanian People’s Organisation and Inkatha Freedom Party, as points for consideration within the PAC.²⁷⁹ The Central Committee of the PAC had long been divided on the issues of forming strategic alliances with organisations such as the BCMA. When the Forum was formed, these issues had to be confronted and debated within the organisation, even though no final positions were arrived at.

The formation of the Sobukhwe Forum seemed to have marked the beginning of open confrontation between nationalists and Marxist-Leninist-Maoists in the PAC. The confrontation was not limited to the elite and leadership of the organisation, but affected the rank and file membership of the PAC in the camps and in the army. The main lines of argument which formed the basis of the conflict between members of the Sobukhwe Forum and the leadership of the PAC, were the following:

The Forum members disagreed with the Dar-es-Salaam PAC because they believed that the latter espoused a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideology and was also infiltrated by Trotskyites and Maoists. The members of the Forum claimed that they were “the true PAC” and they described themselves as “African nationalists or Africanists”.²⁸⁰ They also disagreed with the formal PAC structure and leadership on the question of a negotiated political settlement in South Africa. To the Sobukhwe Forum, negotiations provided the possibility of a solution to the country’s problems and were a “once in a life-time opportunity” that needed to be seized.²⁸¹

The Forum also wanted to forge alliances with Mangosuthu Buthelezi’s Inkatha Freedom Party, despite the controversy of the latter’s position in relation to collaboration with the National Party government. The Forum also indicated its intention to form alliances with the Azanian People’s Organisation and with Nationalists within the ANC, in preparation for participation in the negotiations.²⁸²

²⁷⁹ Sunday Times, 11 November, 1990.

²⁸⁰ Sunday Times, 11 November, 1990; Interview with D.D.D. Mantshontsho, former member of the PAC Central Committee during the era of Vusumzi Make, Umtata, 15 February 1995.

²⁸¹ Sunday Times, 11 November, 1990, Ngcobo Plans a PAC Coup, p. 2.

²⁸² Sunday Times, 11 November, 1990, Ngcobo Plans a PAC Coup, p. 2.

In other words, the Sobukhwe Forum touched on and provided “answers” to long-standing questions which formed the basis of simmering divisions within the PAC. In a way, the Forum’s approach and political stance, especially on the question of negotiations, set the PAC leadership thinking and caused great uncertainty as to whether the “leftist” inclined position on negotiations would be sustainable in the near future. The formation of the Pan Africanist Movement (PAM) inside South Africa from the 1st to the 3rd of December 1989 helped boost the PAC’s morale and commitment to its position on negotiations, as the participants at the first congress of the PAM, endorsed the PAC’s position “that as for now, there exists no basis for genuine negotiations”.²⁸³

It is interesting to note that the ANC of South Africa was the first liberation movement to experience the kind of internal split which the PAC only experienced in 1989. In the case of the ANC, the split was led by some “Leftist” group which formed itself into what was called the Marxist Workers Tendency (MWT) of the ANC. This group was dissatisfied with the ANC’s moderation during the middle to late 1980s. They believed the ANC was “in fact only moving from tactics to betrayal”.²⁸⁴ “Five MWT members were expelled from the ANC in 1985, but following an amnesty, the tendency now appears to enjoy official toleration”.²⁸⁵ Unlike the PAC, the ANC dealt with the emergence of the Marxist Workers Tendency head-on, hence the MWT leaders were expelled but later accommodated after the unbanning of liberation movements in February 1990.

There are interesting points of comparison between the MWT, of the ANC, and the Sobukhwe Forum of the PAC. Both were “entryist” in approach. This meant that they would work within their mother organisations and would eventually constitute a dominant faction to take over the leadership of the organisation. While secrecy surrounded the MWT’s position, with the Sobukhwe Forum it was not the case. The latter was nationalist and popular in its political disposition. The MWT, on the other hand, was “hostile to Africanism”, which was nationalist to the core.²⁸⁶ The Sobukhwe Forum sought unity amongst all African Nationalists irrespective of the organisations they came from and the Forum detested the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist inclination which dominated the main body, i.e. the PAC. With the MWT, the opposite was the case. The main body, i.e. the ANC, was predominantly African Nationalist-inclined, but found no attraction to the advent of the Sobukhwe Forum. In the same way the PAC found nothing attractive in the MWT, even though the basis of the rhetoric was similar. Instead, through the PAM,

²⁸³ ANC Archives (University of Fort Hare): Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, n.d.

²⁸⁴ Interview with a former member of the ANC’s Marxist Workers Tendency (MWT), Cape Town, 20 December, 1995.

²⁸⁵ *The Weekly Mail*, Vol. 6, No. 21, 8–14 June 1990.

²⁸⁶ *The Weekly Mail*, Vol. 6, No. 21, 8–14 June 1990.

the PAC established good relations with a relatively new leftist organisation called the Workers Organisation for Socialist Action.²⁸⁷

The inability of the PAC, to deal with ideological pluralism within its ranks, manifested itself not only in the form of the split, which resulted in the formation of an organisation within an organisation, (as was the case with the Sobukhwe Forum), but also led to inhumane treatment of all those PAC cadres in the camps who were rumored to be “nationalist” and positive towards the “sell-out arrangement with the Pretoria government”, which was about to take place inside South Africa.²⁸⁸ The letter from Dan Mdluli to the Chairman of the PAC reveals this situation. Mdluli raised questions about “the call to branches to attempt to bring back PAC members, and even those ‘under tables’”.²⁸⁹ Mdluli argued that this could not be achieved and that the organisation needed to look at mistakes of the past and find out why so many people were alienated from the PAC. He pointed out that new reports have reached him about “continued beatings which occur with the connivance or orders of Mlambo” even though he did not believe Mlambo would let that happen.²⁹⁰ This was so serious in the PAC camps, to the extent that the Tanzanian authorities had to intervene to stop the practice. There is a gap from existing documentary sources on how the internal split was eventually resolved, especially after the unbanning of the PAC.

The internal enemy myth fed from the long drawn-out debate about political alliances. A case in point was the internal debate about forming an alliance with the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCMA) which, on ideological grounds, appeared close to the PAC. Both organisations believed that a liberated South Africa would be called “Azania”.²⁹¹ They both revered Mangaliso Sobukhwe as the ideological icon and believed in African/black leadership of the struggle, in a way that conveyed connotations of “racial” exclusivity. Most importantly, they were both opposed to negotiations, even though they both modified their stances after February 1990.²⁹² None of the PAC leaders in exile ever addressed the question of relations with the BCMA comprehensively. In the late 1980s, with AZAPO’s unwavering opposition to the political tactics of the United Democratic Front, PAC leaders started embracing AZAPO as the creation of the PAC. This caused internal divisions within the leadership of the exiled organisation. Again,

²⁸⁷ *The Weekly Mail*, Vol. 6, No. 21, 8–14 June 1990.

²⁸⁸ Interview with Comrade Zimbiri (NjeMdaka), Umtata, 18 November 1998.

²⁸⁹ PAC Archives: Letter from Dan Mdluli to Johnson Mlambo – Chairman of the PAC, 18 September, 1987.

²⁹⁰ PAC Archives: Letter from Dan Mdluli to Johnson Mlambo – Chairman of the PAC, 18 September, 1987.

²⁹¹ The historical origin of this name remains unclear.

²⁹² See PAC Does About Turn: Talks are inevitable, *Cape Argus*, 11 June, 1990.

Dan Mdluli's letter to the Chairman of the PAC captured the internal debates on this issue succinctly. Mdluli argues that "the UDF exists for the ANC. It is up to the PAC to grab the hand of friendship from AZAPO, not by lip-service as in the past. Unless unity of PAC-BCM is taken seriously, and not opportunistically, AZAPO will be destroyed; that is not in the interests of the PAC. There were absolutely no grounds for those who stalled the PAC-BCM alliance. Obviously there are fears in some Central Committee members that BCM recruits would outnumber PAC cadres in the camps".²⁹³ Underlying these fears were ideological positions: to the nationalists, the BCM was too Marxist for any alliance with the PAC. To the radicals within the PAC, the alliance between the two organisations was being delayed unnecessarily for reasons of power.²⁹⁴ The question of alliance with the BCM only served to consolidate the grounds of mutual distrust within the PAC leadership and was never resolved after the organisation was unbanned in 1990.

The divisive trends of the periods preceding Mlambo's assumption of leadership in the PAC were not resolved under his leadership. Hence, the feeling among some PAC members interviewed in the course of this research was that the PAC needed a "truth commission of its own" before it could participate in the normal politics of South Africa, post 2 February 1990. The financial position of the organisation was in bad shape and politically the organisation was uncertain about its stance on negotiations.

The impact of leadership diversity on the PAC

The four leadership periods identified in this long chapters 6 had a significant impact on the PAC in terms of defining the stature or profile, capacity and overall strength of the organisation. The PAC emerged from the four leadership periods weakened, incapable of comprehending and adjusting to the dynamic landscape of the politics of national liberation in South Africa. By the time the PAC was unbanned, it had not been able to assert itself as the sole and authentic representative of the people of South Africa before the eyes of the world. Yet the ANC and SWAPO, having been exposed to similar conditions of exile, were able to elevate themselves and project images as the authentic representatives of their people before the international community. This is not without regard to the fact that the four periods of leadership were different, each coloured by the style, political outlook and personality of the chairman at the helm of the organisation. All the same, it is possible to reflect on the leadership in the PAC as a singular phenomenon, given the per-

²⁹³ PAC Archives: Letter from Dan Mdluli (PAC Chief Representative-Canada) to Johnson Mlambo, 28 August, 1985.

²⁹⁴ Interview with M Dyan, 11 September 2000, Cape Town.

meeting threads of continuity and their cumulative effects on the PAC as an organisation. Moving along this perspective, the impact of the four leadership periods on the organisation, (when considered together), was that the PAC remained distanced from the process of popular struggles which occurred inside South Africa during the period covered by the research. It was only in 1989, through the formation of the Pan Africanist Movement, led by Clarence Makwethu, that the voice of the PAC began to be heard in the circles of popular mobilisation inside South Africa. The fact that one hardly heard anything about the PAC during the preceding periods was largely due to the leadership battles which rocked the organisation during this period.

The longest leadership period in the PAC was that of P.K. Leballo, 1962 to 1979. During this period, his power imposed itself as a totality which dominated all PAC structures and conferred on them an authoritarian meaning. It was during this period that the foundations and initial impressions of the PAC were portrayed to the international community. The initial impressions were not beneficial to the organisation. As early as 1967, the conflict within the PAC confronted the OAU Liberation Committee as a problem which required attention and as a result the Moshi Unity Conference was called in September 1968, at the insistence of the OAU Liberation Committee. The Moshi Conference generated more internal problems. In the final analysis all the problems centred around Leballo's leadership style. He portrayed a sense of personal ownership of the organisation. Instead of building a core of leadership within the organisation, he constantly manipulated members of his executive committee depending on the kind of scheme he wanted to implement. He did this with complete disregard for whatever systems and procedures the organisation had developed. As a result of his activities, together with a few executive members closely associated with him, a type of organisational ethos and psyche, which was later difficult to change, emerged and was nurtured over the 17 years of Leballo's leadership. The organisational ethos, which germinated and crystallised during this era, was based on the twin concepts of "divide and rule"

The priority, during this period, was Leballo, the person and his position as Chairman of the PAC; everything else was secondary. The PAC was important only in so far as he remained its leader. As a result, an authoritarian political culture, a "typical case of a liberation struggle not centred on democracy", rank and file alienation from the leadership, mutual mistrust, and political blackmail developed and by the time Leballo was ousted, they had crystallised into a solid political tradition of the exiled PAC.²⁹⁵ The PAC in exile failed to start on a solid footing. Leballo sought to establish himself as the uncontested leader of

²⁹⁵ The concept is used by Colin Leys and John S. Saul in their book, *The Two-Edged Sword*, p. 43.

the PAC in exile but in the minds of PAC members the sacrosanct character of Mangaliso Robert Sobukhwe, the founding President of the PAC (who was in Robben Island prison), could not be removed. Leballo tried, but failed, to elevate himself to the level of Sobukhwe, whose personality and leadership were identified with the organisation's true nature. Unlike the other liberation movements such as the ANC and SWAPO of Namibia, the PAC went into exile before it could establish a stable core of political leaders, bold and assertive enough to keep the levers of power firmly within control of the team.

The period of Vusumzi Make was in many respects supposed to be a period of transition to a more just period within the PAC, but it was short, very delicate and confused. It was delicate in the sense that without the Tanzanian authorities constantly on guard, the PAC army would probably have taken over the running of the affairs of the PAC. In section 6.2, reference is made to the rise of the cadreship movement during the era of Vusi Make. The period showed signs of confusion and many aspects of organisational improvement, which were for the first time addressed through open discussions, were left unresolved because of the indecision of the PAC chairman, Vusumzi Make. His indecision could not be linked to his inability to lead the organisation, but to the fact that he was not confident about PAC political affairs given his constant absence from the organisation to attend to his personal matters. Vusi Make seemed to have developed an impression that his period of leadership was simply a temporary arrangement, while the PAC was still on the look-out for a person to lead the organisation. Nothing dramatic occurred during this period but its significance was that it created a safer space for the exchange of ideas about the nature of re-organisation needed to get the PAC to function as a viable liberation movement. The negative aspect of this period was the disappearance of \$1 million, which could not be accounted for by the PAC Central Committee. This added more strain to an organisation which pleaded poverty. The cadres and rank-and-file members were struggling to meet basic requirements like food, medicines and shelter. When Nyathi John Pokela arrived to take over the chairmanship of the PAC from Vusi Make, the rank-and-file PAC members expected him to perform the miraculous role of a saviour.

The Pokela period of leadership of the PAC was the most promising, primarily because of his political reputation as an ex-Robben Island stalwart untouched by the internal conflicts of the PAC and his charisma and knowledge of the PAC thinking and goals from the time it was founded. Indeed, Pokela had all these qualities which earned him the respect of leaders of Frontline States and liberation organisations. His leadership boosted the morale within the PAC. Problems relating to the accountability of the leadership to the led remained unresolved. His period was coloured by a litany of complaints about Central Committee members whose conduct and performance in various positions were not

satisfactory. He started implementing changes which were met with resistance at Central Committee level. These involved developing guidelines for the various departments, centralising the control of funds, moving all members of the Central Committee to the Dar-es-Salaam headquarters and developing a leadership code of conduct. At least basic procedures and systems for the running of the organisation were defined even though there were problems of monitoring their implementation. His period ended before it could bear tangible fruit. He died in June 1985 and was succeeded by Johnson Mlambo, another ex-Robben Island prisoner.

Mlambo's time as a leader was eventful only with respect to military activity. The PAC's homegoing program was implemented during his period, leading to an increase in the number of recorded APLA attacks from the late 1980s to 1993. He tried to set up diplomatic initiatives, a subject which has not been examined in detail in this publication. Mlambo's leadership period was more externally focused than that of his predecessors. This was due to the nature of political developments which dominated South Africa in the late 1980s. The prospect for a negotiated political solution to the South African question was high on the agenda. The rise of mass political unrests inside South Africa forced the PAC to prioritise visible political activity inside the country in order to establish a physical and psychological presence. The organisation did not want to lose ground to the ANC, which was dominating the internal political scene through its political, church and cultural structures. Mlambo only partially implemented the official PAC organisational systems and procedures, which contributed to the perpetuation of intra-PAC conflict until after the organisation was unbanned.

In short, the period of Mlambo was one of political expediency. Unfortunately, the organisation was not ready for that. Internal conflicts in the PAC did not subside but continued to the formation of an organisation within an organisation in 1989, i.e. the Sobukhwe Forum, supported by A.B. Ngcobo and other PAC leaders in exile and led by Selby Ngendane inside South Africa. Old questions about leadership accountability, management of organisational funds and resources, ideological rifts, intrigues and mutual mistrust remained unresolved. In spite of Mlambo's attempts from 1986 to implement a military programme of action intended to shift the organisational focus away from the internal stalemate, the internal situation remained a bone of contention and continued to be a drag on the organisation.

7 The PAC Camps: A Case Study of Ruvu Camp in Tanzania

Conditions inside the PAC camps remain hidden from mainstream academic research: this is something which can be described as historical sidelining or erasure. An analysis of conditions inside the PAC camps is important, since it offers a magnifying glass through which the exile experience of ordinary members of the organisation can be viewed. There is still a veil of secrecy surrounding the location of PAC camps, the way in which the residents lived and what constituted the fundamental aspects of the experiences of camp inmates during the exile period. In one way or another, this matter remains obscured from historical analysis and enquiry. It has all the implications of a world of experiences which are strictly concealed. This section represents an attempt to uncover this vital area of the PAC's exile history. One of the reasons for the concealment is the fear that an expository analysis might put in jeopardy the present political fortunes of certain people within or outside the PAC. The positions and public image of historical actors, some of whom are still active in the new South Africa, may be affected. Added to this problem is that available evidence offers the researcher a broken dialogue, leaving an figure incomprehensible history, a web of confusion seemingly impossible to untangle. As a result, scholarship in South Africa has overlooked this area, even though inadvertently.

Based on the limited evidence available and the few comparisons which can be drawn from the experiences of members of the ANC in the camps, the chapter tries to reconstruct an image of conditions inside PAC camps. As the late Dr Mantshontsho suggested when interviewed, "some of the internal issues in the PAC, are secrets which history will never divulge".¹ The difficulties experienced in developing a sense of what took place in the PAC camps from the few informants who were contacted during the course of this research, confirm the assertion.

In the case of the ANC, the picture is clearer, but scholarly literature still remains less extensive than one would expect given the popularity of the organisation and the significance of the theme in the history of liberation and human rights struggles in Southern Africa. Of the material that does exist, as Sean Morrow points out, "some is written from within the movement" and even though it provides valuable insights, "political commitment may iron out wrinkles in the historical fabric".² The same can be said about the

¹ Interview with D.D.D. Mantshontsho, East London, 23 June 1996.

² Sean Morrow: *Dakawa Development Centre: An African National Congress Settlement in Tanzania, 1982–1992*, *African Affairs*, Vol. 97, 1998, p.498.

scanty PAC internal literature on exile experiences. The most recent biography of Letlapa Mphahlele, *Child of this Soil – My Life as a Freedom Fighter*, which partially highlights conditions in two PAC camps in Tanzania, is a good example. His work displays the partisan tendencies Morrow identifies in the literature written from within the ANC.³ Careful corroboration with archival and oral sources, therefore becomes very important in order to capture the broad picture.

This chapter examines the development of PAC settlements, first in Lesotho in the early 1960s, and later in Tanzania from 1964 to 1990. There are difficulties in periodising the development of these settlements in more precise terms. The sometimes tentative ideas disclosed, both directly and indirectly in the records and by informants, have been useful in gaining some knowledge of the settlements covered in this chapter, which examines as well the living conditions in the various PAC camps. It focuses specifically on the Ruvu settlement in Tanzania, which was the first stable PAC settlement in exile during the years 1978 to 1993. It examines issues of health, culture, corporal punishment, as well as the general politics of the camp in order to expose the concrete basis of the internal conflicts within the PAC. From this emerges an understanding that a different kind of justice was practiced simultaneously with a rather awkward “class” system, which existed within the liberation forces during the exile period. This was indeed a distortion of the liberating ideals which motivated the exiles to join the “revolution” fulltime, in the first place. Most importantly, this chapter shows the extent to which the lack of policies, organisational procedures and inept leadership affected the lives of ordinary PAC members in the camps. It shows that despite the misery of living conditions in the camps, the residents had moments of joy which enabled them to project a vision of hope beyond their immediate circumstances.

Similar to the ANC of South Africa, the PAC occupied camps (i.e. areas of settlement inhabited by PAC members or various rural army bases in different countries) in various parts of Southern Africa. The most notable camps were in Maseru (Lesotho), Tanzania, Botswana and in Leopoldville (Kinshasa in Zaire).⁴ The Botswana camp was in fact a refugee camp, called Dukwe, about 130 km north-west of Francistown. The camp accommodated members of the ANC, PAC, South African Youth Revolutionary Council (SAYRCO), which was formed by Tsietsie Mashinini, the leader of the June, 16 1976 Soweto student uprisings, and a few members of ZAPU and ZANU (from Zimbabwe).

³ L. Mphahlele: *Child of this Soil – My Life as a Freedom Fighter*. Kwela Books, Cape Town, 2002.

⁴ In Lusaka and Botswana, (and later Zimbabwe), the PAC only established cells and offices, but had no camps in the military sense. It was only in Tanzania that one could identify PAC camps. Also see T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1940*, pp. 311–317.



Fig. 10 The PAC camp Bagamoyo in Tansania, c. 1980.

The Dukwe refugee camp was established in 1980 on the insistence of the Botswana government, (under pressure from the South African government to get rid of “terrorists” from within its borders), so that all the members of liberation movements, not attending school and who were not employed should move to Dukwe.⁵ The camp also accommodated Zimbabweans who were on their way back to their country in preparation for the 1980 independence celebrations.

In previous chapters the establishment of the first category of PAC camps in Maseru and their spread to the surrounding villages and towns was discussed. The difficult living conditions in these camps were described. The only issue not highlighted was that the relocation of the PAC head-office to Tanzania, in 1964, did not mean the end to or closure of the Maseru Chapter of the PAC. In essence it was Leballo and the inner core of his leadership who were the first to move to Dar-es-Salaam. One structure of the PAC continued to operate as the Lesotho PAC mission until after 1985, following the death of the six PAC cadres murdered by the Basotholand para-militia in Qacha’s Neck in March 1985, when relations between the PAC and the Lesotho government became strained.⁶

⁵ L. Mphahlele: *Child of this Soil: My life as a freedom fighter*, pp. 62–65.

⁶ PAC Archives: PAC Address on the occasion of the burial of the Qacha’s Nek six, 30 March 1985.

The circumstances surrounding the murder of the PAC six remains unclear, but the complicity of the Lesotho government in the schemes of the South African regime to eliminate members of the liberation movements in the neighbouring territories cannot be not ruled out. During this time the South African government had adopted the “carrot and stick” approach in its relations with neighbouring countries in Southern Africa. Details of this approach are summarised in Chapter 2. The PAC began to move the majority of its cadres to Tanzania. Unlike the ANC, which had numerous camps in Angola, Zambia, Lesotho and Tanzania, (with more than a hundred cadres in each), the recognisable PAC camps which existed in exile were in Lesotho and Tanzania. The PAC, however, had numerous cell structures in countries such as Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and even Uganda.⁷

In Tanzania, the establishment of a functioning official PAC organ became a priority during the early part of 1964. For the whole of 1964, no major political activity was recorded by the PAC. Accommodation was secured for the PAC leadership “in plush suburbs and hotels”⁸ but for the rank-and-file members, who trickled in in drips and drabs into Tanzania during the course of 1964, accommodation was offered in a bush camp in Chunya. The area needed to be cleared of bush to make it habitable. The camp settlement was offered by the government of Tanzania. In Chunya, PAC members erected “rudimentary structures and shacks for accommodation”.⁹ It appears that the Chunya camp was the first PAC camp in Tanzania. Besides this camp, the PAC had established an army camp in Leopoldville, in the Congo in 1963 where the first group of its guerrillas was trained. The camp in Leopoldville was at Kikunzu. It belonged to the FNLA but was temporarily given to the PAC in November 1963 for the training of its first group of guerrillas in what was code named “Operation Tape Recorder”.¹⁰ Conditions in this camp were typical of conditions in all the PAC camps in Tanzania. In his summary of conditions inside the Kinkunzu camp, Lodge refers to the “ramshackle logistical systems, inadequate food, poor training facilities and inhabitability which led to poor health of inmates, death and disease”.¹¹ In the Chunya bush camp, the same conditions prevailed. Residents complained of being ill fed and lonely, of poor training facilities and worst of all, of rotting in the camp without a programme of action.¹² Many PAC cadres, who had learnt to speak Swahili (the local language), tended to disappear from the camp over

⁷ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/159/4 – Guidelines on PAC Cells Abroad, n.d., pp. 1–6.

⁸ Interview with Comrade Zimbiri, Umtata, 18 November 1988.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Tom Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, pp. 295–321.

¹¹ Tom Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 308.

¹² APLA Notes, Umtata, 23 June 1995.

weekends, to mingle with the “locals” (Tanzanian nationals) for a better quality of life. With the PAC embroiled in leadership battles and internal conflicts, no significant attention was given to expanding the Chunya bush camp into a significant military camp. The cadre population in this camp varied from time to time. It is estimated that at no time did this camp accommodate more than a hundred PAC militants.¹³ Continuously aware of the temporary nature of the settlement and also the importance of secrecy, given the political conditions of Southern Africa as a whole, the residents of Chunya bush camp never established a thoroughly organised community life. As indicated by Nomakhwezi Ganya, one of the reasons why early PAC camps never developed into full-scale settlements was that “once a person establishes himself, he develops roots and this retards the home going process”.¹⁴ Ostensibly this appears to be one of the reasons why the PAC leadership did not fund the development of infrastructure in the Chunya bush camp and conditions in this camp remained precarious, unstable and transient.

The other PAC camps, which developed in the early 1970s, namely the Itumbi camp in Mbeya and Mgagao camp in Iringa, both in Tanzania, were small-scale PAC military settlements. They could not develop any further than the Chunya bush camp. Mgagao camp was slightly better than Chunya and Itumbi in terms of infrastructure and facilities. The small groups of cadres in these camps (between 60 and 100) changed constantly as recruits came and went for military training in other countries inside and outside Africa. The PAC camps until the establishment of Ruvu settlement in 1978, were temporary in nature and the demands for secrecy made it difficult to record their composition, internal organisation and growth. Documentary sources, therefore, have limited information in this regard. Compared to Itumbi, in particular, Mgagao “was a city”.¹⁵ Conditions at Itumbi camp, in Mbeya, were extremely bad. As Mphahlele explains, “humans survived in Mbeya but the story was different for some animals. No matter how healthy dogs and domestic pigs were when they arrived, they would get sick and die within weeks. The dogs wailed hauntingly, as if communicating some evil message before they die. But the dog loving cadres never tired of bringing the pets to the camp and to their miserable end. Only wild pigs thrived in this wild place”.¹⁶ The camp was situated “in the forest and consisted of a double-storey redbrick structure. Its ground floor housed a small camp press, the storeroom and dispensary. The first floor accommodated cadres. There were a few tents, some borrowed from the Tanzania military. These were pitched near the building and were used to alleviate overcrowding. In front of the redbrick building was a parade

¹³ APLA Notes: Pretoria, 21 December 2002.

¹⁴ PAC Archives: PAC Transit Centre Tanzania, 1982, p. 3.

¹⁵ L. Mphahlele: *Child of this Soil – My Life as Freedom Fighter*, 2002, p. 100.

¹⁶ L. Mphahlele: *Child of this Soil – My Life as Freedom Fighter*, 2002, p. 92.

ground used for drills by the soldiers and for sporting activities such as volleyball and soccer”¹⁷. The redbrick building was commonly known among the residents of the camp as Carlton Centre, named in memory of the Carlton Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa.¹⁸ Apart from the Carlton Centre, there was the leader’s quarters called Shangai on the edge of the forest, about 200 meters from the Carlton Centre. The leaders’ quarters was used by the camp commander and his juniors in the army. Members of the Central Committee visiting the camp stayed in Shangai.¹⁹ There was a kitchen separated from the Carlton Centre by a water tap. “A few steps from the fowl run stood what we called the Historic Tree” and “under it we held meetings and listened to many disciplines. The benches and tables under the tree were made of logs split lengthways”.²⁰

One PAC informant indicated that from his experience a “class differentiation” of some kind existed within these camps²¹. He indicated for instance, in the Itumbi camp even though conditions were generally bad, some residents who were accommodated in the leadership block called Shangai, “were better off” when compared to the rest of the cadres in the camp. They always had better access to limited camp facilities and were hardly “cash strapped”.²² This seems to contrast with the rather romantic picture painted by Mphahlele who lived in this camp in the early 1980s. Mphahlele reports that “there was no noticeable difference between the Shangai residents and the rest of us. We ate from the same pot, sometimes from the same dish with them. The cooking roster roped everyone in, including members of the High Command”.²³ A group eating from the same dish was called a *chama*, a Swahili name for party. It is not clear how prevalent the *chama* was, but it symbolised unity in the camp, given the alleged differentiation.

At Mgagao camp conditions were better. The camp consisted of six spacious dormitories, a large administration complex, a big kitchen, a storeroom, a shelter for firewood, flush toilets and showers (even though, for most of the time, the toilets and showers were out of order).²⁴ In this particular camp discipline was strictly enforced. Previous incidents involving the murder of MPLA and ZANU cadres by the neighbouring villagers from the Wahehe tribe had taught members of the liberation movements a couple of lessons. These included controlling movements by cadres from the camps to the surrounding villages. This caused unhappiness among cadres in this camp because it meant that they

¹⁷ *Ibid.* p. 92.

¹⁸ APLA Notes: 21 December 2002, Pretoria; L. Mphahlele: *Child of this Soil*.

¹⁹ L. Mphahlele: *Child of this Soil – My Life as Freedom Fighter*, p. 92.

²⁰ *Ibid.* p. 92.

²¹ APLA Notes: 21 December 2002, Pretoria.

²² Interview with D.D.D. Mantshontsho, East London, 23 June 1996.

²³ L. Mphahlele: *Child of this Soil – My Life as Freedom Fighter*, p. 92.

²⁴ L. Mphahlele: *Child of this Soil – My Life as Freedom Fighter*, p. 100.

were denied the chance of mingling with Tanzanian nationals, especially local girls “some of whom held South African guys in the highest esteem”.²⁵ To most PAC cadres who lived in Mgagoa camp the place resembled “a concentration camp, a prison or solitary confinement”.²⁶ The cadres continued to sneak out into the village, bought homemade beer and brought it to the camp. They also objected to the rule forbidding them from going to the villages, and this rule was eventually relaxed. Cadres were allowed to go to the villages only over weekends. This resulted in disciplinary problems in the camp, thus corporal punishment became common in that particular camp. In fact, corporal punishment was used in all the PAC camps and was among some of the issues which widened the rift between the leadership and the soldiers in the camps. The cadres felt that corporal punishment was arbitrarily applied and the “favoured few were absolved from it”.²⁷ In most instances, the “favoured few” were defined along tribal lines. This issue will be dealt with in the section on tribalism in PAC camps.

The food situation in Mgagoa camp was better than at Itumbi. Crop farming was doing well in this camp. As Mphahlele observes, “the garden thrived. We had abnormally large cabbages, beetroots, onions and carrots. The vast shamba, the ploughing field, was green with maize. We ploughed with a tractor, so our toughest manual work was weeding the fields. We called maize fields “*nguvu kazi*” – Swahili for hard work. We reared a herd of pigs and slaughtered them for meat. Yugoslavia sent us a large quantity of tinned food that drastically changed our diet. We shipped bags of cabbage to Iringa town to sell. We were already anticipating a time not far off when we would be liberated from handouts from OAU’s Liberation Committee”.²⁸

Due to limited documentary evidence on the internal conditions within the three camps mentioned above, this chapter chooses instead to focus specifically on the most notable PAC settlement in Masuguru, in the Bagamoyo district of Tanzania. This camp is sometimes referred to as the ‘Ruvu’ settlement. The conditions in this camp serve as a magnifying glass of the internal dynamics within the PAC, from the late 1970s to 1990, when the organisation was unbanned. However, the challenge is to consolidate the evidence on the development of other PAC settlements prior to the Ruvu settlement such as Chunya, Itumbi and Mgagoa. The precarious conditions and transient nature, the limited size of the population of these three early PAC camps, as well as the range of activities and attention received from the donor community, was negligible compared to the Ruvu camp.

²⁵ Interview with D.D.D. Mantshontsho, East London. 23 June 1996.

²⁶ L. Mphahlele: *Child of this Soil – My Life as Freedom Fighter*, p. 101.

²⁷ APLA Notes, Cape Town, 15 December 2000.

²⁸ L. Mphahlele: *Child of this Soil – My Life as Freedom Fighter*, p. 102.

The Ruvu camp was the first well established and stable PAC settlement in exile. In this chapter, Ruvu camp is explored as a casestudy to portray the internal conditions, the nature of life in the camps and relations among the inhabitants in order to explain the strained intra-PAC relations during the period of exile. The Ruvu camp was started as a transit and rehabilitation camp in 1978, along similar lines as other PAC camps. Recruits from South Africa resided there in transit either to military training or education abroad. The Ruvu camp was initially established to serve as a “rehabilitation camp” similar to the ANC’s Quatro camp in Angola, where the so-called enemy agents and comrades who had committed serious “offences” and breaches of discipline, were “re-educated”.²⁹ With the demise of P.K. Leballo’s leadership and the assumption of power by Make and later Pokela, the development and purpose of the camp was redefined along the lines of the ANC’s Mazimbu settlement near Morogoro and the Dakawa settlement, 55 km north of Morogoro, both in Tanzania. The two ANC settlements were aimed at establishing a stable ANC exile community in Tanzania. They were both aimed at developing human resources for a future non-racial South Africa. Education was at the core of the Mazimbu settlement, hence the establishment of the famous Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College.³⁰

Ultimately the Ruvu camp grew into a settlement for PAC cadres who had families living with them. The settlement resembled efforts of the PAC to “create a fuller human life” for all its members in exile, especially families, children and women.³¹ Residents in this camp were taught technical skills previously denied to them in South Africa. These included skills in horticulture, poultry, carpentry, sanitary engineering, plumbing, pig-gery, motor mechanics and electrification.³²

The formative years of Ruvu Camp (1978–1984)

The Ruvu settlement started during the era of P.K. Leballo in 1978. It expanded during the era of Nyathi John Pokela in 1982 when the Tanzanian government granted 440 hectares of land to the PAC.³³ The aim was to help the organisation to establish a set-

²⁹ M. Twala and E.D. Benard: *Mbokodo: Inside MK: Mwezi Twala-A Soldier’s Story*. Jonathan Ball Publishers, Johannesburg, 1994, p. 40.

³⁰ Sean Marrow: *Dakawa Development Centre*, pp. 498–502. For details about the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College see: B.B. Maaba: *The Social Life of Students of Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College, 1978 to 1992*, Govan Mbeki Research and Development Centre, University of Fort Hare, pp. 1–36.

³¹ PAC Archives: Message from the Chairman of the PAC – Johnson Mlambo, no date.

³² PAC Archives: Short Memorandum on Manpower requirements for Masuguru/Kitonga (Ruvu), Tanzania, 3 November 1986.

³³ PAC Archives: United Nations: Women and Children Under Apartheid, Special Committee against Apartheid: Mission to Angola, Zambia and Tanzania, 3–17 April 1985, p. 5.

tlement for “self-reliance and other developmental activities”.³⁴ As indicated above, the establishment of the Ruvu camp was a response by the exiled PAC to the June 16 1976 uprisings. It was initially conceived of by Leballo as similar to the ANC’s “June 16 Detachment” based in the Novo Catengue camp in Benguela Province in Angola in 1978 and later moved to Fezenda further north across the Rio Donge in Angola.³⁵ The Ruvu camp started as a small refugee camp for PAC members who fled the repression of the South African government following the Soweto uprisings in 1976. It accommodated new recruits who were awaiting military training. It was referred to as a “transit camp”.³⁶ From 1982, with the change in leadership in the PAC, the camp was remodeled along the lines of the ANC settlements in Mazimbu and Dakawa. Both accommodated the June 16 generation of exiles from South Africa. The initial population was 52, increasing by the end of February 1979 to more than 100 persons. By 1982 the figure had risen to close on a thousand people. Compared to the Dakawa and Mazimbu settlements, the population in Ruvu was small. Dakawa’s resident population in the late 1980s was about 5,000 people whereas Mazimbu had a population of roughly 3,200 people.³⁷ A detailed analysis of the development of these two ANC settlements gives the impression that the ANC settlement projects were more robust, both in terms of scale and organisation than were the PAC camps.

Accommodation in the PAC’s Ruvu camp consisted of dormitories which were later upgraded into houses. Each house consisted of five bedrooms and a separate communal dining hall with kitchen and was built as the settlement grew early in 1982. By 1984 about 67 houses were constructed on the site.³⁸ From 1982 the scope of activities at the camp developed beyond the provision of a sanctuary for activists, to the establishment of a self-sufficient community with a clinic, classrooms, mechanical and agricultural training centres where PAC members could acquire skills, which were to be beneficial to the “liberated Azania of the future”.³⁹

Phase one of this settlement was built in 1978. It involved the construction of 67 houses, a separate dining hall, kitchen and toilets, an administration block, one classroom and library, a store, roads and paths, water pumps, boundary fences and gates.⁴⁰ This was

³⁴ PAC Archives: A short Memorandum on Manpower requirements for Masuguru/Kitonga (Ruvu), 3 November, 1986.

³⁵ M. Twala and E.D. Benard: *Mbokodo: Inside MK: Mwezi Twala-A Soldier’s Story*, 1994, p. 42.

³⁶ PAC Archives: PAC Transit Centre, Tanzania, undated.

³⁷ Sean Morrow: Dakawa Development Centre, pp. 499–501.

³⁸ PAC Archives: PAC Transit Centre, Tanzania, undated, pp. 1–10.

³⁹ *Ibid.* p. 1.

⁴⁰ PAC Archives: Culham and Hunters (Chartered Quantity Surveyors): Transit and Rehabilitation Centre, Bagamoyo district, Approximate Estimate No. 2, October, 1978, p. 1.

built on the land assigned by the Tanzanian government. Phase one consisted of one cement house, and one brick house as well as three smaller houses, one large brick building and two incompleated buildings, in which 67 PAC cadres were accommodated.⁴¹ Support for the initial development of phase one was received from various governments as well as non-governmental organisations. The government of the Netherlands made a financial contribution to the costs of repairing the existing facilities and contributed part of the finance for the construction of the first 67 houses. The government of Norway made a similar contribution. The Tanzanian Christian Refugee Service contributed financially towards the purchase of clothes for the young men at the settlement, and purchased urgently needed medical supplies.⁴² In addition to these financial contributions, United Nations agencies such as the United Nations Development Program and United Nations High Commission for Refugees donated US \$233'000 and US \$350'000 respectively.⁴³

During the initial stages of the establishment of the settlement a significant proportion of donor funding was spent on attempts to reduce the costs incurred in the maintenance of the centre. "Apart from the purchase of the furniture and cooking utensils" weekly costs were incurred to purchase food and fuel.⁴⁴ Because the camp was situated approximately 170km from Dar-es-Salaam along a very rough road, transport to and from the camp had to be provided and this increased the costs of maintaining the camp. Hence the weekly costs of administration and maintenance were estimated to be around US \$2'000, excluding the costs of medication, laundry and other incidental costs.

The master plan for the development of the Ruvu camp into a settlement involved the construction of a full-scale village within the settlement area, with accommodation for families and single persons. By 1985 approximately 1500 people were accommodated in the settlement. A pre-school and a pre-vocational school, a dispensary and a community centre were developed during this period. Most importantly, the settlement had farm land to ensure self-sufficiency in food production. Over 55 hectares of land had to be cleared of bush before it could be used for farming. During the early period there were difficulties in getting the settlement to be self-sufficient in terms of food production. Crop farming was not happening as planned. Most of the PAC families and cadres in the settlement came from the townships in South Africa. They were not skilled enough to take advantage of the fertile land to use it for growing crops in the settlement area. They devoted their time to political issues and factional conflicts which tended to divide them according to their former regions of origin. Some issues arose from tribal differences. Skills in agricul-

⁴¹ PAC Archives: PAC Transit Centre, Tanzania, undated, p. 1.

⁴² PAC Archives: PAC Transit Centre, Tanzania, undated, p. 1.

⁴³ *Ibid.* p. 6

⁴⁴ PAC Archives: 'PAC Transit Centre, Tanzania', undated, p. 6.

ture were progressively developed among camp residents. Various agricultural training courses were organised by the PAC's Department of Education and Manpower development in order to equip its membership with agricultural skills.

Ruvu Camp beyond 1984

After the early years the Ruvu settlement developed into a full-scale settlement, a hive of political activity and a home for PAC members in exile. It provided a stable environment for women and children of the PAC. The "habit of infiltrating babies back home", prevalent among PAC exiles, gradually grew less as the settlement became more homely and its facilities expanded and improved.⁴⁵

The settlement became an important source of income to the PAC and contributed towards lowering the costs of feeding the cadres. Between the years 1986 and 1988, enormous quantities of peddy rice, maize, sorghum, cowpea and fruit such as pineapple and pawpaw, were produced from the settlement.⁴⁶ The farming settlement raised 1200 broilers and 12 beef cattle. Crop production in the settlement was made possible largely through irrigation schemes. The Ruvu River, which supplied water to the city of Dar-es-Salaam, Bagamoyo and other towns in Tanzania, passed through the settlement, making irrigation possible. In this way the settlement helped the PAC not to depend entirely on material handouts from international donors, especially on items such as food. The settlement continued to exist until 1993, when most of the assets were sold and the residents of the settlement were relocated to South Africa in preparation for the April 1994 elections.

There were, however, times after 1988, when the farming activities in the settlement suffered. Poor production resulted in continued PAC appeal to donors for funds to buy food for the residents. As a result of periodic food shortages, diseases related to malnutrition, e.g. tuberculosis, diarrhoea, dysentery and helminthiasis, were common among residents. Between 1988 and 1990, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) estimated an infant mortality rate of 121 (which was over 50%) for the area of the settlement, including the neighbouring Pivani region.⁴⁷ This led to the development of an extensive medical facility within the settlement. It provided basic health services, not only for inmates, but also for a population of over 10,000 people living in the neighbouring villages of Kidogozero, Kitonga, Milo and Mbwawa.⁴⁸ With the

⁴⁵ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of Central Committee Meeting at External Head-quarters, Dar-es-Salaam, December, 1–7, 1982, p. 16.

⁴⁶ PAC Archives: Memorandum – Ruvu Settlement, 3rd November 1986. This document details the quantities produced during this period.

⁴⁷ PAC Archives: Message from the Chairman of the PAC, 1988, p. 10.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

development of agricultural and medical facilities in the Ruvu settlement, the following institutions and governments played a major role: the United Nation's Development Program, which helped with agricultural lessons and donated funds for agricultural food production; the United Nation's High Commission for Refugees assisted with agricultural equipment and donated funds for the building of a workshop, garage, clearing of bushes and fencing; the Tanzanian Relief Services helped with the installation of a water system; the Tanzania government provided funds for road maintenance; the government of Norway gave funds for the construction of a 14 km feeder road to the camp; the government of Nigeria funded a health centre and the government of the Netherlands contributed towards the construction of an agricultural workshop.⁴⁹

The PAC Women's section played a pivotal role in the development of the Ruvu settlement during the period after 1988. By this time the Women's section had been granted the status of a full department within the PAC and had a budget of its own. The PAC Women's department took the initiative and responsibility for the construction of a Children's Home in 1988 housing more than 30 children up to the age of seven years. The children's home took full responsibility for all aspects of the children's lives including their feeding, clothing, education and shelter, while at the same time allowing full latitude for a healthy child-parent relationship. The women's section was instrumental in moving the PAC Tailoring Unit from Dar-es-Salaam to the Ruvu settlement in Bagamoyo. The unit made clothes for members of the PAC and sold some of them at the market in order to raise funds for their activities.⁵⁰

The general programme of routine activities in the settlement followed a set pattern: (i) Breakfast from 7am to 8am, (ii) Ideological Studies from 8am to 9am, which involved a series of lectures on Pan-Africanism, Maoism, the formation of the PAC and the life and contributions of Mangaliso Sobukhwe, the founding President of the PAC to the liberation struggle in South Africa, from 9am to 12:30 am, residents would be engaged in various chores. Some would do gardening, fishing, carpentry and painting. Lunch was from 12:30pm to 1:30pm. This usually consisted of rice/pap, vegetables and sometimes meat, when available. From 1:30 to 4pm it was time for rest and recreation, and from 4pm to 5pm was the time for reading current events by someone who was responsible for the radio, on a particular day, followed by analysis and discussion. 6:30 pm to 7:30pm was supper time, which was usually the same as lunch. The early evening programme from 7:30pm to 8:30pm was the cultural hour. New revolutionary songs would be composed, practiced and recorded for radio broadcast. Poems would be read. In fact, a mood of free

⁴⁹ PAC Archives: Message from the Chairman of the PAC, 1988, p.11.

⁵⁰ PAC Archives: Message from the Chairman of the PAC, 1988, pp. 1–12

exchange and creativity was characteristic of this session which usually extended beyond 8:30pm to around midnight.⁵¹

Plans for the further development of the settlement had been made during the period of Johnson Mlambo. A rudimentary sewing industry started by the PAC Women's section in 1983, with five sewing machines, one table, a chair and a small bench was upgraded into a PAC garment factory in 1985, financed by the United Nations Development Program.⁵² The skills base at the Ruvu settlement was further developed with the arrival of 422 PAC exiles from Lesotho in 1985. Besides the deteriorating relations between the Lesotho government and the PAC, the need to move recruits from the Lesotho PAC camps was propelled by the fact that at the Ruvu camp there was a lack of enthusiasm among the cadreship towards manual work, especially, agricultural activities and gardening. This affected food production negatively, which was among the basic reasons behind the establishment of the camp.

Health conditions inside Ruvu Camp

There is very little information recorded on health issues in Ruvu settlement. This attests to the tendency, in the available documentation, to view the residents of this settlement as mere instruments of a political liberation struggle. This chapter seeks to unveil the humanity of the residents at the Ruvu settlement, who experienced moments of joy and sadness. Their choices were not always politically informed. I relate this aspect to the cultural life among the residents at Ruvu camp.

In this section, the concept "health" refers to the total wellbeing of a people, community or group. The medical definition of illness which encapsulates "the malfunctioning of a mechanical system" is adopted here in order to make it easy to categorise diseases which afflicted the camp residents.⁵³ The limited evidence reveals that living conditions inside the camp were not as healthy as would be expected under "normal" circumstances.

One should not generalise in a discussion of health conditions within the Ruvu settlement. From 1983 to 1993, conditions were gradually improving. During the initial phase of the settlement (1979–1982), its living conditions "would only do a disservice to animals".⁵⁴ Overcrowding was frequent as the houses in the settlement were still under construction. Cadres from other PAC settlements would normally flock to the Ruvu

⁵¹ PAC Archives: PAC Transit Centre, Tanzania, undated. p.2.

⁵² *Ibid.* pp. 1–3.

⁵³ L. Doyal and I Pennell: 'The Political Economy of Health', in C.G. Oliver (ed.): Poverty, Health and Health Care in South Africa in Second Carnegie Inquiry into Poverty and Development in Southern Africa, London, 1979, p. 3.

⁵⁴ Interview with D.D.D. Mantshontsho, Umtata, 20 June 1996.

camp, especially over weekends, to visit their “home boys and girls and sometimes they would throw wild parties in the camp”.⁵⁵ Refuse from the camp’s routine activities and from weekends was scattered outside the dwellings and not collected or removed. Very often, children cut their feet on rusty tins and some received severe burns, which became septic, after playing in small spaces near fire buckets. Gora Ebrahim appealed to the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid Mission to Angola, Zambia, and Tanzania in April 1985 outlining the “need for a bigger place to stay, live and work” for the women and children in the Ruvu camp.⁵⁶ In the small children’s house, there were no chairs and they sat on blankets on the ground. No water pump for the settlement meant that residents depended on unpurified water drawn directly from the Ruvu River without being reticulated. “The toilets were too near the houses causing flies and malodours”.⁵⁷ There were no disinfectants and residents used car oil to combat the flies and the smell. These conditions contributed to the spread of diseases such as tuberculosis.

In addition the Ruvu settlement was badly situated as it was open to flooding during the rainy season, although not frequently. The UN delegation sent to inspect conditions at the camp did not manage to get there because, besides the bad road, the Ruvu area generally tended to be a heap of mud and moist clay during the rainy season.⁵⁸ It was difficult for the residents to cope with the conditions, which were a breeding ground for various diseases and constituted a grave menace to the health of residents.

The physical conditions of the camp were exacerbated by the fact that “there was not enough food, cereals, vegetables, fruit and eggs”.⁵⁹ The money raised from donors for the building of houses and the improvement of the general conditions of the camp, was frequently used for food and medicines. Diseases such as tuberculosis, bronchitis, malaria, cholera, pneumonia, and gastro-enteritis were common among residents. These were “physiological diseases” common among the ill-fed and badly housed in South Africa.⁶⁰ The unhygienic conditions of the camp increased the need for medical attention, witnessed by the lengthy list of medical requirements prepared for submission to the donors and to the UN World Health Organisation in 1982. This included such items as antibiotics injections, tablets, antispasmodics, analgesics, antihistamines, antiheumatics,

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ PAC Archives: United Nations-Women and Children Under Apartheid, Special Committee against Apartheid Mission to Angola, Zambia and Tanzania, 3–17 April 1985, p. 5.

⁵⁷ PAC Archives: PAC Transit Centre, Tanzania, p. 3.

⁵⁸ PAC Archives: United Nations: Women and Children Under Apartheid, Special Committee against Apartheid Mission to Angola, Zambia and Tanzania, 3–17 April 1985, p. 1.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* p. 5.

⁶⁰ The language or terminology was used by S. Judges: Poverty, Living Conditions and Social Relations-Aspects of life in Cape Town in the 1830s, Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Cape Town, 1977.

antihelminthics, anaesthetics, anti-malaria, anti-leprosy, gastro-intestinal drugs and respiration system drugs.⁶¹ Most of the items requested were “very basic and were not luxurious items for a community that affords a healthy living”.⁶² Not one year passed without death amongst the residents.⁶³ The medical facility, which existed before 1985, was rudimentary. It lacked the basic equipment such as sterilising instruments, bowls for washing one’s hands after administering the treatment and even beds for the very sick patients who could not sleep on the floor. It was frequent practice to have patients sleeping on mattresses on the floor, despite the fact that this was undesirable.

The living conditions in this camp were among the reasons which caused division between the PAC leadership as represented by the Central Committee, and the general membership of the PAC. From 1981 the Ruvu camp became the centre of most of the ideological debate and critique of the PAC leadership under the chairmanship of Vusumzi Make. The cadres demanded that the leadership should derive its mandate to lead from the rank-and-file membership. They questioned the use of funds and criticised the lavish lifestyle of the PAC Chairman, Vusi Make, and the entire Central Committee.⁶⁴ The strong base of the two-way ideological split which occurred in the PAC during the era of Vusumzi Make (covered in Chapter 4) was centred at the Ruvu and Itumbi camps.⁶⁵ The ideological strength and confrontational stance of the residents of the Ruvu camp stemmed from residents’ perception of neglect and deliberate delays on the part of the PAC leadership to improve conditions in the settlement. The ethnic divisions which emerged and developed as the settlement grew fed into the political discourse within the settlement.

Aspects of culture and leisure among camp residents

The concept of culture is usually controversial and often confusing, requiring clear demarcation. A working definition of culture in the context of this section is that, “culture comprises firstly the values, feelings, symbols, beliefs, mores and customs that give a subjective meaning to the material conditions in which a social group lives. Secondly, it refers to the social practices, the institutional and informal human activities that produce those patterns of meaning. The maps of meaning that are the product of cultural practices do not only exist subjectively, but acquire an objective existence as a totality of determined

⁶¹ PAC Archives: List of Medical Requirements, 1982.

⁶² Interview D.D.D. Mantshontsho, Umtata, 20 June, 1995.

⁶³ Interview D.D.D. Mantshontsho, Umtata, 20 June, 1995.

⁶⁴ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/164/9: Meeting of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, 1979.

⁶⁵ PAC Archives: Feature: South Africa, unnumbered and undated.

notions and concepts that are lived by people as an integral part of their daily lives”.⁶⁶ It is clear from this definition that culture is used to infer the making of meaning and is largely concerned with the interconnections of a society, group of people or community. It is in this sense that culture is used in this text. The main aim is to identify the interconnections that made the residents of the Ruvu camp a community and demonstrate that the residents asserted their lives as valuable despite the limits set by the condition of the camp, but most of all the conditions of exile.

There are few sources on the cultural life in the camp, which yield information as valuable as can be gained from oral sources. This section uses oral interviews with ex-residents of this camp, who were willing to be interviewed during the period of the research. Where possible, oral information is supplemented and corroborated by available documentary sources.

One informant described the settlement at Ruvu as somewhat in between “a township, a working-class town and an African village”.⁶⁷ The reason being was that life in the settlement had features of a township, given the fact that a considerable number of residents originated from the townships in South Africa. The settlement exhibited features of a village because of the predominantly Xhosa– Zulu- speaking elements from the villages of Natal and the Cape Province in South Africa. Most of them lived as though they were in their villages, using clan names as a courteous greeting as well as to instill a certain understanding among their children as to who of their mates fell within the prohibited boundaries of marriage, on the basis of kinship ties.⁶⁸ On the other hand, the kind of developments in small-scale modern enterprises created the impression of an emerging, modern, working-class town. Many of the residents, including a few Tanzanian locals, were employed in the small-scale industries which were emerging in the settlement. The Ruvu settlement was a melting pot, a point of intersection of people from diverse backgrounds where these features were blended together in the comradely way of life of the relatively small but growing community.

As the numbers of residents in the Ruvu settlement increased, the community began to relive several aspects of the “home” experience. As one informant indicated, “we began to listen to “Mbhaqanga” and cooked the kinds of meals we would have enjoyed at home in South Africa”.⁶⁹ Some of the residents participated in producing “revolutionary” songs

⁶⁶ E. Koch: *Ideology and Class Structure – A Review and Critique of the Work of EP Thompson and L. Althusser*. Unpublished Seminar paper, London, 1981, p. 9.

⁶⁷ APLA Notes: 20 December, 2002.

⁶⁸ APLA Notes: 20 December, 2002.

⁶⁹ APLA Notes, Umtata, 23 June 1995; also mentioned by A.T. Moleah: *Inaugural address by the Princi-*

and poetry which were used during commemoration ceremonies. The most notable of these was the Sharpeville Day ceremonies on 21 March to commemorate the death of PAC led marchers shot by the South African Police during anti-pass law demonstration in Sharpeville in 1960. “Sobukhwe Day” was commemorated to mark the death of the founding President of the PAC, Mangaliso Sobukhwe in 1978. June 16 1976 was commemorated in the camp to mark the Soweto uprisings in Johannesburg. These events were an important feature of life, not only in this camp, but also in other PAC camps. Music and dancing pervaded everyday life in this camp and were not performed only to mark cultural days or days of commemoration, but to keep the “revolutionary” zeal alive.

It must be noted that in the camp there was more diversity in music than in any other aspect of the camp’s cultural life. The diversity was reflected in the life styles of various groups in the camp. The “bright boys”, commonly referred to as “*Oolayita*”, mostly from urban townships, had a taste for jazz, reggae, and pop music, whereas the “pumpkins”, also referred to as the “*imixhaka*”, who were mostly from rural backgrounds in South Africa had a taste for more traditional music such as “*umbhaqanga*” and choral music.⁷⁰ Revolutionary songs remained the point of convergence among all the groups. Abdullah Ibrahim captures the experiences in the world of music succinctly when he states “music gives expression to what is deepest in the heart of human beings and this is usually demonstrated by the accompanying style of dance”.⁷¹ Music in the Ruvu camp disclosed implicitly and sometimes explicitly the conflicts and contradictions of the residents’ world of experiences, as exiles and as members of the PAC.

The social life in the camp was characterised by sport which included soccer and volley-ball. These activities were a popular pastime and provided an opportunity for the expression of talent. Mphahlele observed, “soccer provided rare moments of joy and healing” and created a bond among the camp residents and the neighbouring Tanzanian communities.⁷² In fact, sport in Ruvu camp, was “a great leveler” as all kinds of people came into contact with one another.⁷³ Over weekends the youth residents of Ruvu camp, grouped themselves into teams, on the basis of age, (e.g. under-twenty-ones versus over-

pal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Transkei’ October, 15, 1994, p. 1.

⁷⁰ Interview with D.D.D Mantshontsho, Umtata, 29 June 1995; For a better sociological understanding of such terms as “Imixhaka and Oolayita” see L. Ntsebeza: *Youth In Urban African Townships, 1945–1992*, Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Natal, Durban, 1993.

⁷¹ A Ibrahim: Music is a healing force, in M. Motoatse (ed.): *Umhlaba Wethu*, Skotaville Publishers, Johannesburg, 1987, p. 63.

⁷² L. Mphahlele: *Child of this Soil*, p. 68.

⁷³ The concept of ‘a great leveller’ is adopted from R. Botto: “Some aspects of leisure occupations of the African population in Cape Town”, Unpublished M.Soc. Thesis, University of Cape Town, 1954, p. 109.

twenty-ones) and regions from which people had left behind them in South Africa. Soccer matches played according to regions tended to expose the deep-seated divisions according to tribe or language which still existed behind the facade of ideological unity. As Dr Mantshontsho puts it, “the Cape boys were leading in everything else but in sport, especially soccer, the other non-Xhosa boys used to excel but to us as the leadership, this was a non-issue”.⁷⁴ Even though the divide along music tastes cannot be firmly upheld as one of the major divisive factors in the camp community, it, did however reflect a developing sub-culture which cannot be discounted as a factor contributing to the heterogeneity of the Ruvu camp community.

There was some form of schooling in the camp even though, in terms of organisation and scope, it did not match the ANC’s Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College in Mazimbu camp. For the ANC, Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College was the centre around which the entire settlement in Mazimbu developed.⁷⁵ When funding was sought, education for exiles was the major motivation and the settlement developed as an add-on. In Ruvu, accommodation was a priority and education an add-on. The allocation of funds within the organisation reflected that the development of an educational capacity within the PAC’s Ruvu settlement was not a priority. Party funds were divided as follows: 50% was allocated to Defense, 30% to Administration and 20% to Publicity and Information.⁷⁶ There was no special budget for Education and Manpower Development in the PAC. The development of the secondary school in Ruvu camp was not as robust as that of the ANC in Mazimbu. With the PAC’s leadership embroiled in quarrels, especially following the deposition of Leballo, the Education Department of the organisation suffered. There was no one who could conceptualise, in a comprehensive manner, the development of an education centre in Ruvu camp. Besides that, as Elliot Mfafa (head of the Education Department since 1982) indicated at a meeting of the PAC Central Committee, “his department needed competent staff”, as curriculum planners, curriculum co-ordinators, and administrators.⁷⁷

In 1982, the PAC leadership decided to separate the Education Department from the Manpower Department. Planning towards the development of a school in Ruvu dragged on for a number of years. In 1985, two appointments in the field of Education were made

⁷⁴ Interview with D.D.D. Mantshontsho, Umtata, 23 June 1995.

⁷⁵ See B.B. Maaba: *The Social Life of Students of Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College, 1978-1992*, pp. 1–36; S. Morrow: “Dakawa Development Centre”, pp. 497–521.

⁷⁶ PAC Archives: Decisions and Recommendations; Extra-ordinary Central Committee Meeting, Dar-es-Salaam, February, 1981, p. 3.

⁷⁷ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/159/5: Confidential Letter from Joe Mkwana to PAC officials responsible for training in academic and technical development, n.d, pp. 2–3.

by Johnson Mlambo when he became Chairman of the PAC. J. Vanda was appointed principal of a school which was to be built in Ruvu camp and B. Jordan was appointed as Curriculum Specialist. Elliot Mfafa remained the Head of the Department of Education in the PAC. The inefficiency of the two appointees was reflected by the fact that in 1988, the PAC still had no education policy and curriculum.⁷⁸ As a result a three-man commission, which included Elliot Mfafa, Bojana Jordan, and A.C. Nkomo, was set up to develop the education policy and curriculum for the PAC and submit a report to the Administrative Committee by the end of June 1989. When the PAC was unbanned in 1990, the development of an education centre in Ruvu was still in the planning stage. However, a pre-school for young children was established early on in the settlement and developed in 1986. It was run by the PAC Women's Department.

The Ruvu camp accommodated several youths who were relocated from Chunya camp because they were identified for graduate education. For this kind of education, the organisation depended on fellowships and bursaries from the international community, including the United Nations. In 1989 numerous "entry clearances" were sent to the Tanzanian authorities for youths who were on the waiting list for scholarships to universities abroad and in other parts of Africa.⁷⁹ The problem which faced the PAC was how to hold the students accountable and of service to the organisation after completing their studies. The indiscipline of some of the students in the camp during the vacation periods increased as their numbers grew. This became one of the challenges to the PAC leadership. Attempts to deal with this problem started during the era of Pokela and continued unabated to the era of Mlambo. A decision was taken towards the end of 1985 that, "all PAC sponsored students must sign contracts binding them to return and serve the PAC after completion of their courses and that all PAC sponsored students must pay 5% of their stipends to the Department of Education for administrative purposes".⁸⁰ In addition to this, the PAC pledged to enter into agreements with funding agencies and donor organisations to ensure the sponsored students would return to the PAC after completion of their studies. This grand plan improved the situation, but not for long, as some of the students continued to find lucrative opportunities elsewhere after completing their studies. The PAC had no tracking mechanism to identify where their students went after completion of studies and besides that, there were political issues of priority

⁷⁸ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/48/8 – Plenary Session of the PAC, December 1988, p. 2.

⁷⁹ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/69/2: Letter from MK Nkula, PAC Chief Representative in Tanzania to the Principal Secretary in the office of the Prime Minister in Dar-es-Salaam, 1989; PAC/Tan/1/69/3: Entry Clearance to Ruvu Camp, 1989.

⁸⁰ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/159/5: Confidential Letter from Joe Mkwana to PAC officials responsible for training in academic and technical development, n.d, p. 1.

for the organisation during the preparations for a negotiated solution in South Africa in the late 1980s. The PAC's attempts to develop a viable school in the Ruvu camp "were not as successful or even viable" compared to the project started in the early 1960s by the PAC exiles in Maseru. This was due to a lack of dedicated and committed leadership in the area of education.⁸¹

"Tribal"/ "ethnic" tensions among residents of Ruvu Camp

The limited written accounts of exile liberation movements in Southern Africa disclose, implicitly and explicitly, the pervasiveness of tribalism within the liberation organisations despite the "revolutionary" denials. At one stage, between 1967 and 1969, the FRELIMO of Mozambique experienced problems with tribalism. The problem escalated due to leadership contestation which occurred after the death of its founder and President Dr Eduardo Mondlane.⁸² Similar tribal tendencies were manifested within ZANU after the death of its leader, Herbert Chitepo in 1971. Within the ANC of South Africa, the issue of Xhosa or predominantly Nguni (Xhosa and Zulu) leadership created tension in the camps, especially during the 1980s.⁸³ Tribal tendencies in the ANC camps in Angola reached a stage where, in certain instances, if the National Anthem was sung in one of the Nguni languages, non-Nguni's would walk out and vice-versa.⁸⁴

Before one examines the manifestation of tribalism in the PAC camp of Ruvu, it is important to map out the meaning of the concept in order to clear the basis of the analysis. The concept, "tribalism", has fallen into increased disfavour due to its application during the colonial era. Whatever the choice of definition, "empirical divergences" are usually so gross, widespread and frequent as to render the concept, as it exists in the literature, untenable.⁸⁵ Hence, John Saul has argued for the use of the concept of "ethnicity" which hovers around such attributes of commonality as language, territory, political unit and common cultural values or symbols.⁸⁶ Archie Mafeje has invoked, instead, the notion of "tribal sentiment" as the most relevant in the context of Africa and her politics of liberation. He argues that the term "tribe" "has no scientific meaning when applied not to a relatively undifferentiated society, practicing a primitive subsistence economy and

⁸¹ Interview with Elliot Mfafa, Kingwilliams Town, 26 July 1998.

⁸² M. Newitt: *A History of Mozambique*, p. 525.

⁸³ Interview with Wel Skenjana, and Comrade Morris, Pretoria, 24-25 September 2001; This is also covered in L. Mphahlele: *Child of this Soil*, p. 56.

⁸⁴ PAC Archives: Dan Mdluli: Letter to the Chairman of the PAC, Johnson Mlambo, 28 August 1985, p. 2.

⁸⁵ John Saul: 'The Dialectic of Class and Tribe' in *Race and Class*, XX, 4 (1979), p. 349.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* p. 349.

enjoying local autonomy but societies that have been effectively penetrated by European colonialism, that have been successfully drawn into a capitalist money economy and a World market".⁸⁷

In the context of the PAC's Ruvu camp, it would be appropriate to adopt Mafeje's framework and therefore define tribalism as the expression of "tribal sentiments" by various residents of the camp. This is because there is no evidence which attests to the fact that the sentiments developed into a tribal ideology which found expression in coherent forms as one would find, for instance, in the case of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). In the case of the IFP, the concept of tribe was overtly politicised in furtherance of a category of interests linked to the traditional elite.

The utilisation of tribal ploys to rally constituencies in order to engage successfully in competition for powerful positions in the Central Committee is what happened in the PAC during its long exile period. The activation of tribal identities depended on various circumstances. Political prospects and considerations were usually an important factor. The power struggle and competition between P.K. Leballo and his deputy, T.M. Ntantala, in 1977, was, to some extent, based on the mobilisation of tribal sentiments. Ntantala, a isiXhosa-speaking South African from the Eastern Cape, had majority support from the APLA military command structures. Other Ngunis from within the leadership structures of the PAC also supported Ntantala (for instance, it is claimed that a certain Themba Maphalala from the PAC High Command openly canvassed support for Ntantala on an ethnic ticket). Leballo also mobilised support from the seSotho-speaking groups within the PAC and also roped into PAC politics BCP elements who were in Tanzania.⁸⁸ Had it not been for the support given by the post-June 16 generation of exiles who, due to their innocence and political immaturity, were manipulated by Leballo against Ntantala, Leballo's faction would have been unable to oust Ntantala and the entire military High Command of APLA in 1977.

In Ruvu camp, in particular, a wide number of elements stemming from the nature of life in the camp coalesced, situationally, into an expression of tribal sentiment. The situations ranged from football matches in which the Nguni were regarded as less competent, to the leadership of the army and the knowledge of PAC political ideology, in which non-Ngunis were deemed incompetent.⁸⁹ All these were generalisations or perceptions which divided the camp community along ethnic lines. These manifested themselves below the

⁸⁷ Archie Mafeje: "The Ideology of "Tribalism", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 9, 2, 1971 quoted in John Saul: *The Dialectic of Class and Tribe*, p. 350.

⁸⁸ Vusi Shange: 'With the PAC in exile' in *Searchlight South Africa*, Vol. 3, No. 2, April 1993, p. 31; See also the anonymously published newsletter in, *Fighting the Crazy War*, Vol. 2, No. 5, 1990, pp. 1-6.

⁸⁹ PAC Archives: Letter from Dan Mdluli to the PAC Chairman, Johnson Mlambo, June, 1987.

superficial pretences of unity in the struggle. Dan Mdluli, who responded to rank-and-file debates about Xhosa leadership in APLA, argues that “if forces from the Cape seem most prepared to come forward to fight for their land, it is not a fault”.⁹⁰ What is surprising is that the leadership of the PAC, including the camp leaders, whose power and role in enforcing discipline in the camp was so vital (as will be examined in the following section), were aware of the underlying tribal tensions among camp residents, but the matter was never openly addressed. The correspondence between Mdluli and the Chairman of the PAC, (Johnson Mlambo), is a clear illustration of this. In all his correspondence with the Headquarters, Mdluli consistently raised questions about tribalism in the PAC in general. In August 1985, he wrote to the PAC Chairman again and indicated “I always hear unofficial reports of tribalism in the PAC. I have always dismissed reports of tribalism in the PAC, especially as the Central Committee is very much non-tribally constituted: and I have always hated the use of the term “tribalism” to explain divisions in Africa. Often regionalism is mistaken for tribalism”.⁹¹ Mlambo’s responses to the questions from Mdluli tended to be long-winded and irrelevant. In one response, for instance, Mlambo gave Mdluli a long lecture on “Paul Baran and Sweezy reflecting on the crimes of Stalin” and later talked about the resurgence of interest in the PAC “at home and abroad”.⁹² One is therefore likely to conclude that the leadership of the PAC was either evasive or dismissive of the issue about the existence of tribal sentiments in their organisation. This is understandable because to admit that tribalism existed within the PAC would have been deemed an expression of a counter-revolutionary consciousness.

Another generation of recruits arrived in the PAC around 1988-1989 following the uprisings which swept through South Africa from late 1984 to 1987. A portion of the new recruits was accommodated in Ruvu where some were to go through apprenticeships in various trades to develop a skills-base for the PAC and also prepare for a liberated South Africa. By the beginning of 1990, the camp had three groups, each with its own tradition, in the camp, i.e. the senior camp residents, who lived there since the camp was established in 1978 (mostly those from the June 16, 1976 generation), the Lesotho group and youths relocated from other PAC camps, and lastly the 1988/89 new recruits. With the arrival of the latter, ethnic tensions escalated, but political developments and the intensification of the “home going program” left little space for petty tribal quarrels.⁹³ From the nature of crimes which were committed in the camp and the group associations

⁹⁰ PAC Archives: Letter from Dan Mdluli to the PAC Chairman, Johnson Mlambo, 28 August, 1985, p. 2.

⁹¹ *Ibid.* p. 2.

⁹² PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/83/23: Letter from Johnson Mlambo to Dan Mdluli, October 1987.

⁹³ APLA Notes: Umtata, 11 September 1994.

during social events or sporting events, it appears that there were emerging and growing “Zulu cliques” and sometimes mixed “Xhosa-Zulu” cliques. The fights and occasional stabbings during parties over weekends, though not clearly showing a tribalist pattern, indicated that a new and youthful group had arrived in the camp. Fights were mostly over petty issues “like girls, liquor and gossip”, things which mature people would hardly fight and stab each other about.⁹⁴

This kind of problem seems to have manifested itself in more serious proportions within the ANC camp in Mazimbu and especially among the students in Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College. The violence displayed by the new ANC recruits (1988-1989 groups) was shocking. Some “formed themselves into self-conscious Zulu groups and harassed non-Zulus”.⁹⁵ The ANC was able to handle issues of ill-discipline in the camps and dealt with the concerns of inmates by introducing what was called “detachment conferences” in Angola.⁹⁶ Its cadres were divided into three detachments, the Luthuli detachment (consisting mostly of the old guard), the June 16 detachment and the Moncada detachment and members of the National Executive, including the ANC President Oliver Tambo, who belonged to the Luthuli detachment. “Open discussions centred on problems and grievances of any aspect of the ANC soldier’s life. Finally, resolutions and agreements would be noted and drawn up as proposals to be put before the National Executive Committee”.⁹⁷

With the PAC, there seems not to have been a systematic engagement with camp residents to address the grievances of camp inmates. The only notable efforts were those of Pokela who visited the camps frequently and always appealed for conciliation and peace among the camp residents. He is still remembered for his now famous Swahili saying “*Ntwa ke ya madula mmoho*” meaning “it is usually those who live together who quarrel”.⁹⁸ Despite his good efforts, tribal sentiments remained as a source of underlying tensions in the PAC camps, especially in the Ruvu settlement.

Forms of punishment in the camp

As the camp community grew, problems of ill-discipline also increased. Because of the relatively better conditions, the Ruvu settlement was regularly infiltrated by ill-disciplined people from the PAC army. This trend strengthened from 1981 onwards. This created

⁹⁴ APLA Notes: Umtata, 11 September 1994.

⁹⁵ B.B. Maaba: *The Social Life of the Students of Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College, 1978-1992*, p. 15.

⁹⁶ PAC Archives: Message from the Chairman of the PAC, 1988, p. 47.

⁹⁷ PAC Archives: Message from the Chairman of the PAC, 1988, p. 47.

⁹⁸ L. Mphahlele: *Child of this Soil*, pp. 103–105.

serious problems of ill-discipline within the camp community. When examining the issue of discipline in the Ruvu camp, it becomes important to note that the camp accommodated groups of people who differed not only in terms of background and language, but had developed a host of traditions and norms over the years in exile which had to squeeze into the relatively tight confines of regulations initially designed for a small camp community.

The authority of political leaders was important in maintaining order in the camps. Quite often there were quarrels among the inmates, some were of a petty nature, resulting from “drinking and womanising over weekends” but others contained a serious political element.⁹⁹ The nature of offences has been covered in the section above. The kinds of punishment meted out were varied and were not always proportional to the ‘offences’. Dating back to the pre-Pokela era, beatings were a common punishment in the camp and this involved sjamboking, resulting in grievous bodily harm and sometimes death. This was administered under the supervision of the camp committee. “The critical period of this style led to the death of Mncedisi Sabatana, Mahoyi Mpondo and George Moletsane”.¹⁰⁰ These people were labeled dissidents because it was believed they were advancing the political program of Ntantala’s APRP within the PAC. The leadership of the PAC denied these incidents despite the advice from overseas PAC members such as Dan Mdluli. This is explained in Mdluli’s letter to Mlambo where he stated “I know you have not personally issued an order to beat up someone. What I am saying is that you have an opportunity to correct this tendency among certain sections of the leadership not to adopt the Idi Amin style of solving disagreements”.¹⁰¹ According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report, there were other alleged cases of the elimination of “dissidents” and “undisciplined” APLA and PAC cadres including that of Chaka (real and full name not known) who was killed in the PAC camp at Chunya in Tanzania by High Command for “allegedly stealing and concealing” in his transitor radio a pistol used during his training in Conarky, Guinea and thereby “harming” PAC’s relations with the government of Guinea.¹⁰² The manuscript of a book, which was supposed to have been published in 1985, (written by Henry Isaacs), indicates that between June 1982 and January 1985 “at least six persons were murdered, their physical elimination sanctioned or condoned

⁹⁹ Interview with D.D.D Mantshontsho, Umtata, 20 June, 1995.

¹⁰⁰ PAC Archives: Dan Mdluli: Letter to the Chairman of the PAC, Johnson Mlambo, 1 June, 1987, p. 2; L. Mphahlele: *Child of this Soil*, p. 109; Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC): Draft Report on PAC/Poqo/APLA Human Rights Abuses (1960–1993), p. 27.

¹⁰¹ PAC Archives: Dan Mdluli: Letter to the Chairman of the PAC, Johnson Mlambo, 1 June, 1987, p. 2.

¹⁰² TRC: Draft Report on PAC/Poqo/APLA Human Rights Abuses (1960–1993), p. 27.

by the PAC leaders who accused them or suspected them of being ‘dissidents’.¹⁰³ Isaacs’ accounts are viewed with suspicion by some of the informants contacted during the research. They all emphasised that Isaacs’ relationship with the Party was strained and that he was extremely bitter, such that he would go to any length to discredit the PAC. In the TRC report it was indicated that Isaacs confused in his account “cases of some PAC cadres who died in genuine accidents with cases of abuse of human rights”.¹⁰⁴

Other forms of punishment which were meted out at the Ruvu camp in Bagamoyo included being ordered to do various exercises on the parade ground accompanied by floggings. Because of the arbitrary manner in which punishment was administered and dissatisfaction with the general conditions in the camp and the failure of the PAC’s home-going programme, some of the cadres deserted to the ANC.¹⁰⁵ It was not that the ANC was any better than the PAC in terms of administering corporal punishment. In fact the ANC was worse in the sense that abuses inside its camps were more systematic than in the PAC. Corporal punishment of alleged “dissidents” was administered through the ANC Security Department, which came to be known as “*Mbokodo*”, an isiXhosa term which literally means “the grinding stone”.¹⁰⁶ Just as in the PAC camps, the ANC camps were characterised by “top-down” rigid instructions to cadres and refusal or failure to comply was enough to earn one the label of dissident. Dissidents were crushed brutally. Hence a special camp called Quatro was set up in Angola, as a prison where all dissidents were kept. In Quatro, prisoners were beaten, subjected to hard labour and some would “disappear” for ever. “The camp remained highly secret within the ANC. Even among the NEC, the only ones who had access to Quatro were Mzwandile Piliso, Joe Modise and Andrew Masondo”.¹⁰⁷ This raises questions as to whether the entire leadership knew about this camp, sanctioned its establishment, knew about the atrocities which were committed inside the camp and whether they had any control over treatment of inmates and how the camp itself was run.

In the case of the PAC the question which comes to mind is whether there was any policy on the administration of corporal punishment. Or were there any provisions in the PAC Constitution, related to corporal punishment? The Disciplinary Code of the PAC was discussed in Chapter 3, as well as the loopholes which could lead to abuses by those in positions of power.

¹⁰³ PAC Archives: H Isaacs: South Africa’s Pan Africanist Congress in the 80s: Chronic Instability and Revolutionary Ineffectiveness, no date.

¹⁰⁴ TRC: *Draft Report on PAC/Pagol/APLA Human Rights Abuses* (1960–1993), p. 27.

¹⁰⁵ See the case of Vusi Shange in *Search Light South Africa*: Vol. 3, No. 2, April 1993, pp. 31–33.

¹⁰⁶ For the details of the organisation of Mbokodo see M. Twala and E.D. Benard: *Mbokodo: Inside MK*.

¹⁰⁷ B. Ketelo, A. Maxongo, Z. Tshona, R. Massango and L. Mbengo: A Miscarriage of Democracy: The ANC Security Department in the 1984 Mutiny in uMkhonto we Sizwe, in *Searchlight South Africa*, Vol.2, No.1, July 1990, p. 38.

A draft policy position developed by the PAC leadership in exile on how to deal with indiscipline among the ranks of the cadres is interesting in this instance. In December 1981, the Central Committee of the PAC took a decision authorising the army (APLA) “to take requisite action it deems fit in enforcing discipline in the army within the spirit of the Constitution and the Disciplinary Code of the Party”.¹⁰⁸ Consequently, the leadership of the PAC decided, in February 1986, on policy guidelines on “*Corporal Punishment in the PAC as a Disciplinary Measure*”.¹⁰⁹ The documents laid down the following prescriptions with regard to punishment in the camps and within the ranks of the army:

The breaking of PAC and army discipline shall be punishable by inflicting corporal punishment as a last resort after the following procedures have been followed:

- The alleged offender shall be duly tried by a Tribunal of Justice as provided for in the Disciplinary Code of the PAC to determine his innocence or guilt.
- No corporal punishment shall be inflicted on first offenders, at any rate, not until other forms of punishment, short of expulsion have been tried.
- That corporal punishment is not repeated on any individual member of the PAC within a six-month period.
- That the principle of justice is observed. No judgment may be passed without the accused answering for himself.
- That punishment is not humiliating to the individual member in front of his fellow members.
- A register of corporal punishment shall be kept and updated at all times.
- No female member of the PAC shall under any circumstances undergo corporal punishment of any kind.¹¹⁰

These guidelines appeared reasonable on paper, but the extent of gross brutality with which corporal punishment was administered, as explained in this section, shows that the policy was not adhered to. Comrade TK, one of the interviewees in this research, argued “from experience that I have gone through no one can tell me that there was a policy followed when we were beaten by those guys. I lived in Bagamoyo before I went to China for training, those ‘Mecs’ were cruel and cold when it comes to corporal punishment and I was told how some people died in the process. Me, Broer I was traumatised, imagine I was young, having escaped from Unita only to land in that kind of situation”.¹¹¹ Again, this demonstrates the fact that in many instances the PAC had policies and procedures whose implementation was never followed. Hence the extent of divisions, tensions and in-fighting. Unfortunately, they crystalised to become the culture of the organisation even after it was unbanned in 1990.

¹⁰⁸ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the PAC Central Committee, Dar-es-Salaam, December, 1–7, 1981, pp. 1–3.

¹⁰⁹ PAC Archives: Corporal Punishment in the PAC as a Disciplinary Measure, 6 February, 1986.

¹¹⁰ PAC Archives: Corporal Punishment in the PAC as a Disciplinary Measure, 6 February 1986, pp. 1–2.

¹¹¹ Interview conducted with TK, Langa Township, 21 December 2000.

From a survey of PAC internal documents in the archives at Fort Hare, no reference could be found to PAC women who received corporal punishment. Hence, one has no grounds to relate the experiences of women in this regard. The examination of incidences of corporal punishment in the PAC discloses that there was no possibility of adherence to policy stipulations, especially given the wider context within which offences were defined. Dissidents were usually major victims because their “definition” or identification was arbitrary. A dissident was, in many cases, a deliberate construction which showed the meanness of outlook on the part of those who had power or were connected to powerful individuals in the organisation. All one needed to do was to vilify the political opponent, “campaign for support against him and then he will be destroyed in the name of purging the organisation of the enemies of the revolution”.¹¹²

In summary, this chapter dealt with the living conditions within the PAC camps. The observation was based primarily on the PAC settlement in Ruvu. The chapter has traced the development of PAC settlements in Tanzania and examined the living conditions inside the camps. It also examined health conditions within the Ruvu settlement, which was supposedly the most well-developed of all the PAC camps in exile during the period covered by the research. It covered the conditions of health in the camp and also discussed the manner in which camp residents established livable conditions in spite of the precariousness of their circumstances. The aspects of culture examined in this chapter revealed how the residents used sports activities and music to give meaning to their lives. Despite these cultural activities, there were simmering divisions along tribal and regional lines, but these never received the attention of the PAC leadership until the unbanning of the organisation in 1990. The chapter also discussed the issue of corporal punishment in the PAC. It highlighted the fact that there were policy guidelines on how to administer corporal punishment in the PAC. Like other policy guidelines developed and ignored by the organisation, such guidelines were never followed. Hence, persistent divisions and conflicts were a major feature of the PAC’s existence in exile. Ordinary PAC members, who lived in the camps, were victims of the unguided authority of camp commanders who administered corporal punishment willy-nilly, without regard for organisational procedures and policies. The hope that one day “Azania” will be liberated sustained the endeavours and loyalty of camp inmates. Some endured the camp conditions because they had no alternative. Others, who could not endure the situation anymore, deserted the organisation, and joined the ANC whilst a few others declared themselves refugees in various parts of Southern Africa.¹¹³

¹¹² PAC Archives: ‘T.M. Ntantala is Gone: But His Ideals Will Conquer’, Undated.

¹¹³ PAC/Tan/146/23: Letter from Eddie Yethu Muendane to the Administration of the PAC, 1986.

8 The Evolution of the PAC's Military Strategy (1961–1993)



Fig. 11 The Frontline States leaders Samora Machel (left) (Mozambique) and Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe) supported the military struggle of the PAC.

Four phases in the development of the PAC's military strategy are identified in this chapter. The first period began in 1961, with the development of *Pogo* (the military wing of the PAC) and the spread of *Pogo* activities until 1967. The second period, beginning in 1968, was marked by the transformation of *Pogo* into a formal guerrilla army. This period continued up to 1978 when APLA went through a change of organisation and strategic focus. APLA adopted a new plan called the "*New Road of Revolution*". The plan was formally embraced by the organisation in 1978. Theoretically, the "*New Road of Revolution*" was the military strategy and plan of the PAC until its unbanning in 1990. For purposes of clarity and to allow detail to coalesce, the period 1978 to 1990 can be sub-divided into periods, i.e. 1978 to 1979 – the adoption of the "*New Road of Revolution*", as PAC

military strategy during the last years of Leballo's leadership; 1979 to 1981 – the period of transition from Leballo to Pokela; 1981 to 1985 – the revival of the PAC under the Chairmanship of Pokela and 1985 to 1990 – the closing period of Johnson Mlambo. The criteria for the identification of these periods, are the developments which occurred in the PAC. (These developments affected the organisation and strategy of APLA.)

In 1978 the PAC adopted the "*New Road of Revolution*" as a military strategy. This began under the leadership of PK Leballo, who was both Chairman and Commander-in-Chief of APLA. The programme was embraced as the military strategy of the PAC until the organisation was un-banned in 1990. Leballo was deposed in May 1979 and a new leadership, under Vusumzi Make, assumed the reins of the PAC from August 1979 to January 1981. The army was re-organised with the assistance of the Tanzanian government. The involvement of the Tanzanian government was sought to bring discipline to APLA following the abortive army coup in November 1977. T.M. Ntantala, the leading exponent of the "*New Road of Revolution*" and the entire High Command, which consisted of experienced cadres, were expelled in 1978 at the Arusha Conference as a result of the insistence of a section of the army loyal to P.K. Leballo. A new leadership of the army was appointed under Vusumzi Make. The High Command, as a structure of authority within the army, was abolished and replaced by a Task Force. When Nyathi John Pokela



Fig. 12 APLA soldiers training together with ZANLA forces. (not date, no place)

took over from Make in 1981, there seemed to have been no APLA military activities to implement the new strategy. Between 1981 and 1985, Pokela phased out the Task Force and re-introduced the High Command. He was succeeded by Johnson Mlambo in June, 1985. Mlambo led the PAC as Chairman and Commander-in-Chief of APLA from 1985 to 1990. Even though Mlambo made no structural changes in the organisation of the army, he seems to have refocused APLA on actual guerrilla attacks on the South African state. It is debateable whether or not the conduct of “war” by APLA, during this period, was congruent with the theoretical suppositions of the New Road of Revolution. Mlambo’s term of office was certainly a distinctive period in the development of the PAC’s military strategy, as the rate of APLA attacks in South Africa increased.

The development of the PAC’s military strategy was a contested terrain, hence the strained relationships within the organisation. The disagreements emanated from the fact that when APLA was formed in 1968, from the members of *Pogo*, no clear pronouncements of new rules, procedures or strategies were made, to mark a transition from one era to another. *Pogo* recruits were simply given a new name and were deployed to various countries for training. There was no thorough internal discussion or agreement on matters of military strategy. Different cultures co-existed and sometimes clashed within the same army. The generation of the 1960s and the generation of the late 1970s, within APLA, co-existed with difficulty. As the late Mantshontsho put it “we were *Pogo* stalwarts and some of these boys from the black consciousness tradition could not understand us and we could not understand them. The standards of discipline were different. We were taught differently about the struggle by our old men and the young boys did not have that background”.¹ These differences will only become clear if one analyses the approaches of *Pogo* militants to the liberation struggle.

APLA continued to exist until the PAC renounced the armed struggle in 1994. Even though this chapter maps out trends in the development of a military strategy in the PAC, it does not delve into the details of military operations conducted by *Pogo* militants and later APLA combatants. It only analyses the development of strategic thinking around the nature of “war” in South Africa, and how the “war” needed to be conducted. Drawing from secondary literature and primary sources, as well as a few oral interviews, the chapter goes beyond tracking the evolution of strategy, to interpreting the PAC’s understanding of the nature of war, specifically the liberation struggle in South Africa, as this had significant implications for the running of the organisation, its structures and organisational ethic of “right” or “wrong”. The issues examined in this chapter cut across

¹ Interview with D.D.D. Mantshontsho, Umtata, 20 June 1996.

the various periods outlined. Some of the basic questions that are examined are about how the PAC defined the “enemy” and whether the definition of the “enemy” crystallised into military strategy. Was there a clearly defined strategy for conducting the war against the enemy and how did the strategy change over time? What were the sources of change in military strategy? To address these questions, the chapter begins with an examination of the origins of the PAC’s military strategy in 1961 and shows how it evolved over the following years. This is a difficult area to deal with, given the complex philosophical questions around how ideology and rhetoric see their way into the concrete essence of a military strategy. The evolution of the PAC military strategy during the Leballo era and in the post-Leballo era, focusing in particular on the home-going programme (which was a military strategy on its own), initiated and defined by the PAC leadership under Nyathi Pokela in December 1981, will also be key areas of focus.

The evolution of the PAC’s military strategy is not intelligible without a proper interrogation of both *Pogo* and APLA’s command structures and the relationship between these structures and political decision-making structures and processes. The question of “chains of command” is important because from it one can infer the internal relations of power and also determine which interest groups or power blocks had authority in determining the direction of the “Azanian revolution”.² This attests to the significance of understanding the institutional framework of liberation movements since it was part of the very discursive conditionalities of possible successes.

The origins of the theory of “revolution” and military strategy during the period of *Pogo* (1961–1967)

The military wing of the PAC originated from the activities of *Pogo*, an underground military movement which operated inside South Africa after the banning of the ANC and PAC in April 1960. Events which led to the two organisations being outlawed were discussed in the previous chapters. They re-emerged in the internal underground and in exile with a declaration that they were not “to walk the non-violent path anymore”.³ The outcome of the PAC’s campaign on the 21st March 1960 transformed the liberation struggle from one in which the emphasis was on non-violence to one of armed struggle. “The ANC founded Umkhonto we Sizwe on December, 16, 1961. Even though there was no formal re-christening of the PAC, the organisation nonetheless resurfaced in 1961

² APLA Notes, 23 June, 1995.

³ Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Report on PAC/*Pogo*/APLA Human Rights Abuses (1960–1993), TRC Research Department, Cape Town, 1998, p. 5.

bearing the name *Pogo*, which has since then been described as the military wing of the PAC”.⁴ The ideological worlds of the two organisations (i.e. the ANC and PAC) were important determinants of the choice of strategy to wage the war in South Africa.

Within the PAC, from the date of formation, the conception of the struggle in South Africa was premised on the idea that the liberation struggle was “a war that just was and still is, for what started then” and was still not finished.⁵ This view is also captured by Joe Mkhwanazi, the exiled PAC’s Administrative Secretary, in his submission to the International Conference on Peace and Security in Southern Africa in Arusha, Tanzania, 1985. He said “in 1961, the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania took up the thread of armed struggle left behind by our great forebears. We took the decision to challenge the regime militarily. Necessity dictated that we should start with what we could afford. Thus emerged a weapon known as the *panga*. The nearest meaning attached to it by white liberals is that it is a butcher’s knife. But it is not”.⁶ Mkwanzazi compared the war which *Pogo* militants waged against the Apartheid government with historic wars between Africans and early European settlers. He traced the wars back as far as the 1906 Bambata War in the Natal colony. The interview with Madasa also confirmed these sentiments as he pointed out that “as *Pogo* warriors, we decided to fight the Boers because we inherited the fight from our ancestors. Our strategy was based on the PAC motto: serve, suffer and sacrifice, and that is what we did during *Pogo*”.⁷

What can be deduced from the above is that the beliefs and understanding of the nature of war by the various generations of PAC members, some in positions of leadership, were important sources in the formulation of military strategy. As will be discussed in later sections, the beliefs and understanding of the nature of war within the PAC were not homogeneous, hence the existence of different perspectives or “schools of thought” about the nature of war in South Africa. The views of the dominant faction within the leadership, usually associated with the Chairman, constituted the position of the organisation. This was the case despite the many dissenting voices. The source of conflict was that the younger generation who joined the PAC in the late 1970s, i.e. after the 16 June, Soweto uprisings, did not idealise either tradition or autarchy to map the road to the future but embraced Marxism-Leninism and Maoism as sources of strategy. The older generation, who joined the PAC pre-1976, invoked the traditions of *Pogo* and 21 March 1960 demonstrations to focus the PAC’s military strategy and agenda. The differences of tradition,

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 5.

⁵ Rian Malan: *My Traitor’s Heart*. Vintage Edition, London, 1991, p. 23.

⁶ PAC Archives: Joe Mkwanzazi: Liberation Struggle in the Light of Recent Developments in Southern Africa, p. 9.

⁷ Interview with Mr Madasa, Langa, 11 February, 1987.

based on generation gaps and political traditions, were major sources of tension in the evolution of the PAC's military strategy.

It is useful, at this stage, to uncover the strategic thinking behind *Pogo* in order to understand the kind of politics and tradition which *Pogo* "stalwarts" brought into APLA. From existing sources on the incidence of *Pogo*, there seems to have been little correlation or connection between political ideology and the "war" strategy of *Pogo* militants. This becomes clear when one analyses the call for action written in the leaflets which were distributed in Nyanga Township in December 1961. Their English translation, which appeared in the *Rand Daily Mail*, 23 March 1963, reads as follows:

We are starting again Africans....we die once. Africa will be free on January 1st. The white people shall suffer, the black people will rule. Freedom comes after bloodshed. *Pogo* has started. It needs a real man. The Youth has weapons you need not be afraid. The PAC says this.⁸

The essence of the above message is simple and appealing, but reflects, at the same time, a rather distorted, if not archaic theoretical framework within which a military strategy, that has a national liberation purpose, can be located. Besides the vague sense of historical continuity of the liberation struggle, the military strategy of the *Pogo* militants did not seem to follow the four basic ideological documents of the PAC discussed in Chapter 3. The Pan Africanist Manifesto, being the most politically elaborate PAC basic document, made reference to communism, socialism and race or racism. On race the Manifesto states that "African people are very much proud of their race – the human race. They recognise no inescapable fundamental differences among members of the three main branches of that race: the Caucasoids, Mongoloids and Afrinoids".⁹ In line with this view, the PAC regarded itself as a non-racial movement, despite the fact that it did not have whites as members of the organisation. In its view, multi-racialism, which was what the ANC and Congress Alliance were associated with, was "racialism multiplied".¹⁰ Public statements by PAC leaders reflected a sound grasp of the organisation's position on these issues. During the insurrection, however, *Pogo* militants reduced the organisation's ideological statements to a set of slogans: "we must stand alone in our land; Freedom – to stand alone and not be suppressed by whites"; "*amaAfrika Pogo*"; "*Izwe Lethu*".¹¹ Even though these slogans hardly make sense from the vantage point of today; they had meaning and were

⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, 23 March, 1963, also quoted in T. Lodge: *The Pogo insurrection, 1961–1968*, p. 182

⁹ PAC: Pan Africanist Manifesto, in *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukhwe, 1949–1959*, p. 71.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 71; R.M. Sobukhwe: Opening Address- PAC Inaugural Conference, 1959, in *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukhwe, 1949–1959*, pp. 30–31.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

useful to the historical actors in the sense that the rather abstract theory of Pan Africanism was made concrete. This was done by ordinary men in an attempt to address the naked experiences of the political conditions in which they lived. The *Pogo* ideology and its concomitant military strategy mirrored a struggle against the conditions of Apartheid oppression driven to the very edge of despair. Sobukhwe, the founding President of the PAC, was very critical of *Pogo* and distanced himself from the ugly atrocities perpetrated by the *Pogo* movement¹². *Pogo* slogans tended to express the wrath of destitute Africans, as some of those slogans went as follows: “we shall drive them to the sea”; “they must go back to Europe”. These were effective in mobilising the kinds of cadres needed for the *Pogo* uprising.¹³ Hence, the “revolutionary” activities of *Pogo* resulted in various kinds of abuses and violent murders.

It is important to note, at this point, that the quality of membership of *Pogo* was also reflected through the ideas and strategy of the movement. In other words, the strategy of *Pogo* militants reflected the experiences and consciousness of the membership. The membership was largely drawn from a particular social category of South African society. As Lodge indicates, *Pogo* was a “political movement with a large following from migrant workers, but with positions held by men with at least some education, work skills and political experience”.¹⁴ In Langa Township, Cape Town, the organisation of the movement was based on “homeboyism”, meaning that men from particular regions or districts, e.g. Lady Frere in Transkei, would come together and form a cell.¹⁵ A group of cells constituted a branch and branches formed a region. “Within each branch a ‘task force’ would be constituted from the younger men in the organisation. The ‘task force’ members would do guard duty at meetings, collect and manufacture weapons and explosives and in the event of the uprising undertake the initial attacks”.¹⁶

The membership of cell structures was not only limited to migrant workers but also farm workers, as well as teachers and students in the rural areas in the Eastern Cape. These were in essence underground structures.¹⁷ The particular social character and organisation of the movement was not limited to the Eastern Cape but was found nationally. In other words, one of the salient features of the *Pogo* movement was that its members came from

¹² Geil Gerhardt: Interview with Robert Sobukhwe, Kimberly, 1970.

¹³ Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Report on PAC/Pogo/APLA Human Rights Abuses (1960–1993), p. 6.

¹⁴ T. Lodge: The Pogo Insurrection, p. 180.

¹⁵ The concept “homeboyism” emerges from the work of Monica Wilson and Archie Mafeje: Langa: A Study of Social Groups in an African Township. Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1963.

¹⁶ T. Lodge: The Pogo Insurrection, p. 190; TRC: Report on PAC/Pogo/APLA, p. 7.

¹⁷ Daily Despatch, 7 March, 1963; Interview with Pearce Mfanasekhaya Gqobose, 1 August, 1996.

the social background of “school” people as opposed to “red people”.¹⁸ The “elite” and intellectuals who constituted the core of political leadership of the PAC and who had the ideological know-how of political theory were behind bars when *Pogo* started. These included the PAC’s leading intellectual, Mangaliso Sobukhwe, who was arrested on the 21st March, 1960.

P.K. Leballo was also arrested. From 1962 he operated from Maseru in Lesotho, as acting President of the PAC. Instead of providing ideological and political leadership in order to refine the content and traditions which the movement had spontaneously acquired, he added fuel to the fire. He summoned groups of *Pogo* branch leaders to Maseru in February and March 1963 and promised external support to the *Pogo* uprising. The Maseru-based PAC leadership, under Leballo, promised *Pogo* activists that “a ship full of arms of war donated by President Abdul Gamal Nasser of Egypt would dock at Port St. Johns before D-DAY at night. The fact that the ship never showed up at all did not discourage *Pogo* from executing their mission”.¹⁹ The idea of external support for the *Pogo* uprising was used inside South Africa as a trump-card for mobilising mass support for the movement. This was in addition to the intrinsic benefits which included the return of land to Africans. This was an intrinsic attraction in the sense that the majority of *Pogo* members were “landless folk who had ventured into the sometimes hostile cities of Johannesburg, Cape Town, East London”, etc. to find jobs in order to support their families in rural areas.²⁰

With Leballo’s influence firmly entrenched, the political leadership of the PAC, mostly in Maseru, had defined the enemy as the police and the army. As Mkwanazi puts it, “all of us knew that the South African racist settler regime is kept in power by the army and the police force”.²¹ Seemingly, this definition of the enemy never filtered down to the rank- and-file membership of the movement which constituted *Pogo*. To *Pogo* militants the targets of attack on the day of the uprising (which was to be in early April 1963), were the police stations, government infrastructure, such as the post offices, power installations and other government buildings as well as the white civilian population.²² Black inform-

¹⁸ These terms are used by Philip Mayer in his book, *Townsmen and Tribesmen*. Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1961; P. Mayer: *Black Villagers in an Industrial Society*, 1980. They are elaborated in detail in L. Ntsebeza: ‘Youth in Urban African Townships, 1945–1992, Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Natal, 1993.

¹⁹ Interview conducted by Mxolisi Mgxashe with Vuyani Mngaza, former Chief Coordinator of *Pogo* Plan in 1963, East London, May 1997.

²⁰ Truth and Reconciliation Commission: ‘*Report on PAC/Pogo/APLA*’, p. 6.

²¹ PAC Archives: J Mkwanazi: *The Liberation Struggle in the Light of Recent Developments in Southern Africa*, p. 9.

²² T. Lodge: *The Pogo Insurrection*, p. 192.

ers, spies and collaborators, which included Bantustan Chiefs, were another category of targets.²³ The disjuncture in the definition of the enemy continued and became a permanent feature in the organisation. This was never clarified by any of the leaders who came after Leballo.

In summary, the incidence of *Pogo* produced a generation of militants to whom action preceded political theory and operation superseded strategy. Short-term planning and the immediacy of results enjoyed priority over long-term planning for results in the distant future. Even though most of them had basic schooling, they were not adequately educated people. *Pogo* militants were also misled by P.K. Leballo. Even though he knew the ideological tenets of the PAC much better than *Pogo* activists, he encouraged their short-term plans in order to win their support in the PAC leadership battles in Lesotho. The militants from *Pogo* uprisings laid the foundations of APLA. The arrival of new recruits, untouched by the events of *Pogo* and driven by “inexperienced” ideological understanding of Pan Africanism and the liberation struggle in South Africa, was bound to generate problems. To them political theory and the quality of revolutionary consciousness preceded action. They believed in the importance of revolutionary theory to inform political activity. Hence, Leballo’s radical ideological pretensions won the loyalty and support of young militants within APLA. As one informant, who joined APLA in 1978 put it, “we all adored PK because he came across as a revolutionary, clued up on revolutionary theory and we never questioned his other agendas”.²⁴

It is interesting to compare the ideas of *Pogo* militants in the PAC with those espoused by other military movements during the same period. *Pogo* was founded, for instance, on the idea that the armed struggle was a necessity in order to mobilise the rural poor who the PAC regarded as the peasantry, into a conscious political force which could not only overthrow the government but also seize and mould the country’s political economy to meet their own ends. This strategy was different from that of the ANC’s Umkhonto we Sizwe. To the latter, the armed struggle was a tactical bargaining stance and was thrust upon the organisation by the firm intransigence of the National Party government. A peacefully negotiated political solution remained the preferred route. This framework and approach to “war” inside South Africa, shaped the ANC’s military strategy throughout the exile period. To the ANC, the armed struggle was not an absolutely necessary condition of liberation; liberation could occur without the shedding of blood.

The PAC operated from a completely different premise. According to the PAC, the

²³ Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Report on PAC/Pogo/APLA Human Rights Abuses (1960–1993), p. 7.

²⁴ APLA Notes, Sunnyside Pretoria, 21 December 2001.

armed struggle was justified by the fact that the ruling white minority assumed their position of dominance through the use of violence and force. Therefore it was unlikely that they would surrender their dominance and the privileges that have accrued, on their own accord. They have “to be forced to surrender”.²⁵ In this sense the armed struggle was an indispensable condition for liberation. The PAC believed they could not achieve their objectives without war.²⁶ Moving from different premises in terms of conceptions of the armed struggle, the evolution of military strategies assumed different forms in the two organisations. Hence, one of the salient features of *Pogo*’s approach was the tendency to invoke history, even though dubiously conceived, and traditional identities that it implied to conjure up a sense of “African Oneness” which was essentialised. This remained a persistent element of the PAC’s military strategy, even after the transition to APLA. The implicit assumption was that the African masses were ready for a revolution because of their conditions of oppression and exploitation.

In terms of “revolutionary” impulse and definition of targets, the *Pogo* insurrection shared a number of common features with the *Mau Mau* movement in Kenya which occurred in 1952, about nine years before the incidence of *Pogo*. It is not clear whether there was any historical inspiration drawn by *Pogo* from the *Mau Mau* uprising or whether the strategies of *Pogo* were consciously based on *Mau Mau* strategies. Despite the differences in particular historical experiences and context, the two movements shared common aspects with respect to organisation and strategy. Both movements operated underground and drew their support from the rural areas. The undertones of millenarianism, the idea of the sudden dawning of a more just era, pervaded the “all- embracing nature” of pre-occupations in both movements.²⁷ Members of both organisations were bound by an oath of secrecy and their targets were similar, i.e. black collaborators, the police as well as white civilians. It took the Kenyan government three years to contain the *Mau Mau* and the South African government, approximately seven years to finally deal with the sporadic incidents of *Pogo* attacks.²⁸

The sources of *Pogo* military strategy were diverse, ranging from the spirit mediums in rural areas, to the workers in various towns of South Africa, to farm workers and a few members of the educated lower-middle-classes such as teachers and students. *Pogo*

²⁵ PAC Archives: J. Mkwanzazi: The Liberation Struggle in the Light of Recent Developments in Southern Africa, p. 17.

²⁶ This is clearly stated in a confidential document compiled by APLA High Command after the 1967 Moshi Conference, see: PAC Archives: Military Committee (MC) Directives to APLA. undated; See also PAC Archives: The Commissars Field Manual, 1970, p.8 .

²⁷ The concepts are used by Tom Lodge in his article “The Pogo Insurrection” in his characterisation of the movement in South Africa.

²⁸ P. Esterhuysen: *Africa A-Z Continental and Country Profiles*. Africa Institute, Pretoria, 1998, p. 203.

was also partly sponsored by the leadership of the exiled PAC. By 1967, the activities of *Pogo* had been contained by the security establishment of the South African government. Hence, 1967 marked the emergence of a new line of thinking in the PAC, firmly rooted in the political ideology and relations established with China in 1965. However, threads of continuity with the approach adopted by *Pogo* remained, but the exception was that a clear political theory and framework for the armed struggle was developed.

The slow “death” of *Pogo* and the rise of APLA

The “death” of *Pogo* is connected to the March 24 1963 press conference in Maseru in which Leballo disclosed the plans of *Pogo* to mount a general uprising inside South Africa. The Basutoland police, in collaboration with South African security forces, arrested all PAC leaders they could find in Maseru and confiscated documentation which included membership lists, from the Maseru head office of the PAC.²⁹ Subsequently, many *Pogo* members, as well as suspected members, were arrested and tried en masse in South Africa. Hence, some scholars, such as Mahlangu, regard *Pogo* as an “uprising that never rose”.³⁰ The military achievements of *Pogo* were limited to a series of local uprisings, (which Lodge covers in detail) and also violent conspiracies inside South Africa, between 1961 and 1967.³¹

Pogo members, who escaped police arrest, fled to Maseru in Lesotho where they grouped together with other exiles who had been in Lesotho since 1961. The early group of exiles started programmes in military training, even though clandestinely, under the leadership of Pearce Gqobose and T.M. Ntantala.³² With funding provided by the OAU Liberation Committee, some PAC members were sent for military instruction in Congo, Ghana and Algeria. “By 1968 around 200 of these trainees, constituted what was formerly designated that year as the Azanian People’s Liberation Army”.³³

From the outset APLA based its military strategy on the assumption that South Africa had a significant peasant class, whose land hunger could be exploited for revolutionary goals. A similar thinking underlined the strategy of *Pogo*. This line of analysis went against the grain of real circumstances as depicted by the state of the political economy of rural South Africa. “The formation and structure of classes, the penetration of new relations

²⁹ T. Lodge: *The Pogo Insurrection*, p. 192.

³⁰ D.A.B. Mahlangu: *From South Africa to Azania*, p. 2.

³¹ Tom Lodge: *Soldiers of the Storm*, p. 105.

³² Interview with E Mfafa, Kingwilliams Town, 22 July 1997; PAC Archives: ‘Izwe Lethu’, No. 11 & 12, Nov. / Dec. 1965, p. 9.

³³ T. Lodge: *Soldiers of the Storm*, p. 106.

of exchange and production”, according to Bundy, had completely altered the political-economy and landscape of rural South Africa.³⁴ A sizeable landless group, who Bundy calls the “rural proletariat”, had begun to grow, after the promulgation of the 1913 Native Land Act. The manner and extent of its integration into the modern economy defied its categorisation as a peasantry.³⁵ This category of people “entered wage labour with the express intention of accumulating enough cash to buy or lease land a little later. With the twin pressure of increasing population and rising land prices, fewer and fewer were able to achieve this aim”.³⁶ So it appears that the peasantry, as a social class in South Africa, was dying out and was re-emerging instead as a rural proletariat. This social category was identified on the basis of the fact that it could not subsist without wage labour.³⁷ So the PAC’s assumption of the existence of peasants as a social class in rural South Africa and therefore an appropriate site of guerrilla activity was ill-founded. What this shows is that the very ideological framework from which the military strategy of APLA emanated was confused and lacked analytical rigour.

The new military strategy of the PAC was explained by P.K. Leballo at the Moshi Conference in September 1967. The conference was summoned by the PAC leadership at the insistence of the OAU Liberation Committee. The organisation needed to resolve its internal differences outlined in Chapter 6. The OAU also insisted that the PAC needed to demonstrate its commitment to waging an armed struggle against the South African government, otherwise there would be no grounds to justify the grant it received from the OAU Liberation Fund. The Moshi Conference was therefore called amidst a period of stress and crisis in the PAC. Instead of using the meeting as a forum where unity could be forged, Leballo used the occasion to enforce his authority and ideological stance. He outlined the new approach which he called a “people’s war” based in the countryside of South Africa.³⁸ According to P.K. Leballo “guerrilla war by its nature is based, in the countryside. From this flows the conclusion that the Azanian revolution can develop from a guerrilla type of war in the countryside, extending its area of authority and then surrounding and taking over the cities”.³⁹ The idea of a protracted guerrilla warfare was introduced at the Moshi Conference. This was a remarkable shift in the PAC’s understanding of the nature

³⁴ Colin Bundy: *The Rise and Fall of South African Peasantry*, David Philip, Johannesburg and Cape Town, 1988, p.117.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

³⁶ Colin Bundy: *The Rise and Fall of South African Peasantry*, preface, p. 117.

³⁷ Colin Bundy: *The Rise and Fall of South African Peasantry*, preface.

³⁸ PAC Archives: Report of the National Executive Committee Meeting, Moshi, Tanzania, 19 to 22 September, 1967, p. 13.

³⁹ PAC Archives: Report of the National Executive Committee Meeting, Moshi, Tanzania, 19 to 22 September, 1967, p. 13.

of the “war” in South Africa because previously, and especially during the *Pogo* uprising, instant successes of the revolution were claimed and expected. With the new strategy there seemed to be an acknowledgement that to overthrow the National Party government would require a prolonged and carefully worked out military struggle.

A rurally based strategy and warfare was further justified in the following manner: “It is from the ranks of the peasants in the reserves, who starve amidst plenty, and millions of landless labourers in thralldom, ‘squatting’ on white farms, that the guerrilla forces find their most eager support, and thus the starting point in the coming conflict”.⁴⁰ From the strategy outlined above, one can also deduce whom the enemy was. The “unprotected”, “isolated” white farmers, “dotted over the landscape of Azania”, were the primary targets in terms of APLA military strategy.⁴¹ The rationale for targeting white farmers was that their farms were large and isolated from one another. Besides that, they were surrounded by “a sea of 4.5 million black farm workers and their families – the most cruelly oppressed and exploited of the South African people”.⁴² Besides that, the terrain where most farms were located was regarded as conducive to guerrilla war because it was bushy, mountainous and sometimes forested.

Attacking white farmers was of strategic significance in the sense that the farmers would be forced off their land and bases and sanctuaries for APLA would be opened. Rudimentary organs of the new Azanian state would be set up and when the last shots were fired, it was anticipated that the revolution would have produced “an administrative and governmental apparatus of a new kind”.⁴³ In a way, the PAC’s military strategy was seeking to emulate what happened in Mozambique under FRELIMO where liberated zones were established and rudimentary government structures were set up in the course of the war.⁴⁴ The Zimbabwe African National Union, headed by Herbert Chitepo as President and Josiah Tongogara as the Commander of the army, also adopted a military strategy similar to that of FRELIMO. The difference between the two was that FRELIMO believed in the vanguard role and leadership of the working-class in the revolution and was Soviet sponsored. FRELIMO’s use of the rural areas was not based on a theory of a peasant-based or -led revolution, but was dictated by circumstances. ZANU and the PAC shared a theoretical view of the role of the peasantry and their leadership in a revolution launched from the rural areas to the cities. “Both ZANU and PAC received the bulk of

⁴⁰ PAC Archives: Report of the National Executive Committee Meeting, Moshi, p. 14.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* p. 14.

⁴² *Ibid.* p. 13.

⁴³ PAC Archives: Report of the National Executive Committee Meeting, Moshi, p. 14.

⁴⁴ Allen and Barbara Isaacman: *Mozambique: From Colonialism to Revolution*, pp. 80–99.

their support from China and the Maoist approach to guerrilla warfare was quite different from the theories of the Soviet Union which supported ZAPU and the ANC”.⁴⁵ Whilst the first group of ZANU cadres received training from China in September 1963, the PAC’s group, led by Gerald Kondlo, received training in late 1966. They attended lessons in military instruction, and received training in mass mobilisation, strategy and tactics at the Nanking Military Academy in Peking.⁴⁶

Why was ZANU able to wage a “successful” armed struggle, compared to the PAC, and eventually win the elections in 1980? The PAC received support from the same country (China), used the same theoretical tools and strategies and received similar support from the OAU Liberation Committee, but emerged unsuccessful in the 1994 elections to the embarrassment of its members and sympathisers. This is the question facing analysts and researchers in Southern Africa today. It requires a root-cause analysis. It also needs an examination of the historical relationship between the peasant classes and guerrilla warfare in situations of national liberation struggles. This issue is important because it was the theoretical cornerstone of the strategies of ZANU and the PAC of Azania.

In his book, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe*, Terence Ranger makes a profound statement of analytical significance. He states that “the revolutionary potentiality of African peasants plainly depended upon what kind of peasants they were”.⁴⁷ This kind of prognosis is based on Ranger’s analysis of the Maka peasants of South Eastern Cameroon. As Ranger puts it, they suffered much “primary” resistance to colonial occupation and much “secondary” resistance to colonial administration without ever being in a position to develop peasant consciousness, despite their objective existence as a peasantry.⁴⁸ In the case of Zimbabwe, the specific history of peasants and the logic of peasant aspirations, produced outcomes which were different from South Africa. The peasantry in South Africa, as described by Bundy, relented, after the expropriation of land in 1913, by relating to the new economy as workers rather than as peasants. This was contrary to what happened in Zimbabwe where similar circumstances generated, among the peasants, a radical political programme before guerrilla political education arrived on the scene.⁴⁹

Therefore, assuming that a peasantry existed in South Africa, the PAC would still have struggled because of its failure to interrogate precisely the kind of peasantry it had to deal

⁴⁵ David Martin and Phyllis Johnson: *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, p. 10.

⁴⁶ Truth and Reconciliation Commission: *Report on the PAC/Poqo/APLA*, p. 14.

⁴⁷ T. Ranger: *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe*, p. 21.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁴⁹ See T. Ranger: *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe*, pp. 19-49; B Munslow: *Africa: Problems in the Transition to Socialism*, pp. 1-33.

with vis-à-vis the commitment necessary to wage a guerrilla war against the Apartheid government. The critical point at issue is covered by Tickner in his article, "Class struggles and the food supply sector in Zimbabwe". He argues that there is usually difficulty not just in mobilising the peasantry into collective resistance, but also in creating the necessary consciousness through people's war. But the matter is complicated further because this comes to them from outside, through the leadership of revolutionary intellectuals.⁵⁰ In other words, the theoretical premises of the strategy of APLA were awkward and almost impossible. This is one of the reasons why the military initiatives of APLA were never as frequent and effective as intended by the PAC.

The interview conducted with Elliot Mfafa, during the course of the research, brings another important element to the fore. Mfafa indicated that at the Moshi Conference, "the majority of PAC members, including members of the army, were not sure of what Leballo was trying to do. Even the leaders, very few, if there were any, knew what his plan was, in so far as the future of the struggle was concerned. His long address at the Conference occurred in the midst of tension; some people had been suspended; the mood in the organisation was generally wrong, so to speak. I was not on board and I am sure many of the soldiers were not on board too".⁵¹ If these views are anything to go by, it means that the nationalists from the *Pogo* era would not support the new Maoist approach to the South African war. The style of leadership in the PAC did not allow for debate of these issues. One may deduce that the PAC was not united on the strategic course that was charted by Leballo in 1967. What this shows is that, added to the inappropriateness of the Maoist ideological course chosen by P.K. Leballo, the majority of the membership of the organisation did not really understand it. Even though the ideological choice was made on the basis of the fact that *Pogo's* approach was closely related to the Maoist approach, the theoretical underpinnings of the new strategic approach were never debated internally but were imposed from the top.

Despite the organisational incoherence and confusion which existed within the PAC at theoretical and strategic levels, there was pressure, largely from African host countries, to see action. "The fervour among all fighting forces of all the Southern African liberation movements and Guinea-Bissau was quite high and support from independent Africa and the democratic world had doubled since Sharpeville. So also the pressure on the leaders of the ANC and PAC in particular by the fighting cadres to let them go home to use the military skills they had acquired".⁵² The first major attempt was made by ZAPU's military

⁵⁰ V. Tickner: *Class Struggle and Food Supply Sector in Zimbabwe*, pp. 9–20.

⁵¹ Interview with Elliot Mfafa, Kingwilliams Town, 23 July 1998.

⁵² Truth and Reconciliation Commission: *Report on the PAC/Pogo/APLA*, p. 13.

wing, ZIPRA, and the Luthuli Detachment of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC of South Africa, in September 1967, when they crossed the Zambezi River and headed for Wankie Game Reserve in Rhodesia, resulting in skirmishes with the Rhodesian forces in which thirty-one guerrillas were allegedly killed.⁵³

After this incident, towards the end of 1967, an OAU meeting in Kinshasa called upon the PAC to justify its continued existence and in February the following year, at a meeting of the Council of Ministers in Addis Ababa, the movement was presented with an ultimatum: if the PAC did not mount any infiltration efforts by June of 1968 all OAU aid would be terminated. The organisation had been permitted, by the Zambian Government, to establish a military base at Senkobo on the Southern borders of Zambia, where its first APLA-trained guerrillas were based. PAC offices were also opened in Lusaka. The aim was to make infiltration into South Africa easy. The PAC, in alliance with COREMO (Mozambique's Revolutionary Committee), a bitter rival of FRELIMO, launched an ambitious plan called Operation Crusade.⁵⁴ The aim of the operation, as explained in the report of the TRC, was to infiltrate at least 12 guerrillas into South Africa in order to establish base areas and build "armed people units" to prepare for a protracted people's war. On the basis of interviews with Enoch Zulu, a survivor of Operation Crusade, the TRC report reconstructed the details of the battle which took place between the Portuguese security forces around Villa Peri inside Mozambique. The names of the 12 APLA guerrillas that were listed in the report include Gerald Kondlo, who was the Commander, trained in China and Algeria, Samuel Madodana Guma, the Political Commissar of APLA, Oscar Ntoni, Qhasana, Menzeleli, Twala, Bele, Enoch Zulu and Zeblon Mokoena. Enoch Zulu and Zeblon Mokoena were the only two who survived from the whole group.⁵⁵ From the Portuguese side, security officers who were killed were Eusebio Gonclaves Nobre; Emildo Lopes Nogners and Antonio Azarias Chicavane.⁵⁶

Operation Crusade occurred amidst internal and external pressure. In other words, APLA engaged in military combat without a well-refined and coherent body of theory and strategy of war in South Africa. A short conversation about Operation Crusade with an ex-APLA and SANDF official revealed some of the mistakes made during the launch of this initiative. The interviewee retorted, "I think one of the greatest mistakes our leadership made was to sacrifice our best combatants as well as the daring Commander of

⁵³ David Martin and Phyllis Johnson: *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, p. 10; M. Burger: *They Fought for Freedom*; Chris Hani, pp. 18–23.

⁵⁴ Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Report on the PAC/*Pogo*/APLA, p. 13.

⁵⁵ Interviews conducted by Mxolisi Mgxaji with Gasson Ndlovu; Mongezi Guma and Pearce Gqobose, August 1997; Also see TRC: 'Report on the PAC/*Pogo*/APLA', p. 14.

⁵⁶ These names appear listed in the TRC Report on PAC/*Pogo*/APLA, p. 14.

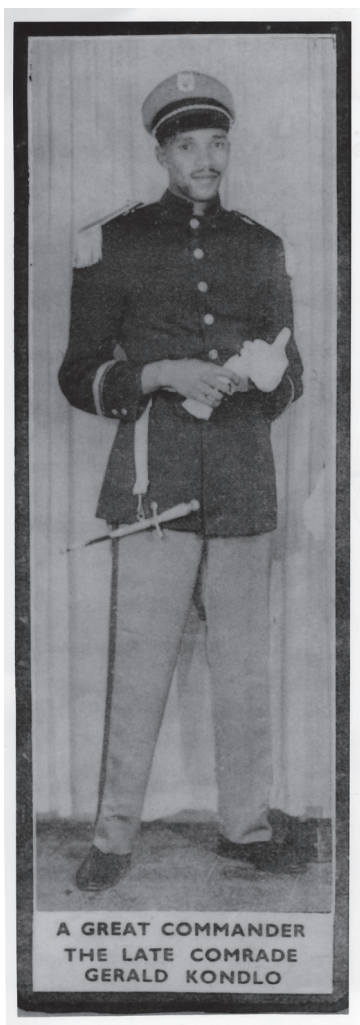


Fig. 13 Gerald Kondlo, the first commander of APLA.

APLA forces, Gerald Kondlo. Perhaps they should have sent other cadres but not the cream of army leadership”.⁵⁷ Perhaps one of the reasons why the PAC sacrificed what the interviewee called “the best” cadreship had to do with the foundational principles of the PAC, namely that leaders must be in the frontline during the struggle, as demonstrated during the Sharpeville anti-pass demonstrations.⁵⁸

Unlike ZANU, no documented analysis is available reflecting the organisation’s view of the mistakes of Operation Crusade. There seem not to have been time to do a post-mortem of the operation, learn from it and consciously improve the strategy of guerilla warfare. Instead, Operation Crusade evoked a sense of heroism. As stated in the TRC Report on the PAC/*Pogo*/APLA, “Kondlo left a deep inspiration among future PAC fighters who probably did not have as much fury and fun as Kondlo and his comrades had in their efforts to ‘blaze a new trail’”.⁵⁹

In the case of ZANU, the PAC’s ally, in 1966 the organisation made an effort to examine, in a special session, the failures of its military programmes. It was concluded that one of the fundamental causes of their failures was the belief that “all that was necessary to end white minority domination was to train some guerrillas and send them home with guns: this would not only scare the whites but would ignite a wave of civil disobedience by blacks”.⁶⁰ Hence, ZANU changed its strategy and focused more on a protracted programme of people conscientisation as a precondition of a successful people’s war. Criticism was also levelled “not

⁵⁷ APLA Notes: Pretoria, 21 December 2002.

⁵⁸ This principle is elaborated in PAC Information Department: *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe*, 1949–1959, pp. 3–64.

⁵⁹ TRC: *Report on the PAC/Pogo/APLA*, p. 14.

⁶⁰ David Martin and Phyllis Johnson: *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, p. 11.

against the cadres, but also against their superiors who hastily threw them into battle apparently for short-term political gain rather than for levelling the ground for a protracted armed struggle”.⁶¹ This kind of post-mortem was also implemented by the ANC after the Wankie debacle in 1967. Even if the exercise in introspection was painful for the ANC (since it caused division and disillusionment among cadres who felt the Wankie battle was badly planned and ‘unfavoured’ cadres were sacrificed in that battle), it did help to revise their strategy and approach to war. In the PAC, no similar exercise was conducted.⁶² At the same time it is incorrect to conclude that after Operation Crusade there were no inclusive serious debates or discussion about military strategy within APLA. All the same, it is still not clear what kind of lessons were drawn by the PAC from Operation Crusade.

APLA’s strategic thinking (1969–1978)

After the Villa Peri incident, APLA set forth to map out, in clear and specific terms, its strategy for a people’s war. This was built on the overall framework developed and articulated by Leballo at the Moshi Conference in 1967. The ideas of the ‘New Plan’ were declared in a document prepared by the Military Committee of the PAC and was entitled “Directives to APLA”. The document highlighted, in broad terms, the significance of strategy and tactics in the war against Apartheid. It indicated that “the combat methods must be based on the possibility of gaining the initiative on the battle field” and forcing the “enemy” to fight the battles of APLA’s choice.⁶³ In practice this meant that APLA was to “widen the target area” of activities, “spread the tempo”, increase the scope of attacks and “develop control of operational fronts”.⁶⁴ Some of the tactics which APLA designed, to force the “enemy” to fight “as they wanted it”, included forcing the government to scatter and spread its forces as APLA cadres were deployed in every corner of South Africa, depriving government forces of the initiative in the battle and also preventing the government forces from using their best combat methods.⁶⁵ Other combat strategies involved luring adversely situated troops out of their bases so that when they began their search-and-destroy operations and ‘terrorist raids’, APLA could strike them at the most unexpected moment away from their bases. Theoretically, this was the desired approach for APLA. Whether it was actually implemented, is another question. On the whole, the ideas in the “*New Plan*” found way for more refined expression in the “*New Road of Revolution*”, officially adopted in 1978.

⁶¹ David Martin and Phyllis Johnson: *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, p. 12.

⁶² M. Twala and E.D. Bernard: *Mbokodo*, p. 49; B. Ketelo, A. Maxongo, Z. Tshona, R. Masango and L. Mbengo: *A Miscarriage of Democracy*, p. 35.

⁶³ PAC Archives: *MC: Directive to APLA*, p. 3.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* p. 3.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* p. 4.

Other issues covered in the strategy document were about the “factors of war” or the ingredients of a successful armed struggle. These included a “correct political line” which is correctly applied; a “heroic and disciplined people’s army; a competent military command and a strong base of operation”.⁶⁶ These were regarded as the key areas of competence in APLA’s military strategy. Organisational tasks, which were outlined in the strategy document, included the building of the PAC structures throughout the country and the expansion of a people’s army. The strategy document was slender on the vital issue of mass mobilisation and conscientisation which, according to Maoist strategy, is a pillar of any successful people’s war. The emphasis was on combat strategy and ethics of action in the battle. The extent to which the elements of the strategy were implemented during APLA operations is difficult to assess. The reason is that after the 1967 Villa Peri incident, very few APLA attacks were recorded until the mid-1980s. This should be understood against the background of internal conflict that dominated the PAC during the era of Leballo. During the first half of the 1970s, the PAC spent time negotiating the route to South Africa with countries such as Zambia and Botswana. In some instances, negotiations with governments succeeded, but the problems remained with relationships between the PAC and liberation movements that controlled access to certain routes. SWAPO of Namibia, for instance, controlled the route via the Caprivi Strip into Botswana and would not help the PAC because of the latter’s ties with UNITA of Jonas Savimbi.⁶⁷ PAC efforts stalled because of a combination of diplomatic and political factors. This attested to the failure of PAC’s political leadership to prepare politically for their armed forces.

Despite these problems, APLA made a few attempts to match theoretical strategy with some action between 1975 and 1979. A small group of PAC guerrillas ran a “program of military instruction for members of the Mngomezulu tribe, a community straddling the South Africa-Swazi border, which at that time, was divided by a succession dispute”.⁶⁸ The three PAC instructors were captured by the South African police and that brought the enterprise to an abrupt end. Again in 1978, three APLA insurgents were arrested in Krugersdorp, after it was discovered that they had established an arms dump in the area. Again, in 1979, the Transkei government arrested five members of the PAC, i.e. Sabelo Phama (Gqwetha), Mack Mboya, Synod Madlebe, Xola Mketi and Mawethu Vitshima.⁶⁹ Besides these sporadic incidents, it was quiet from the side of APLA until the mid-1980s. The formation of the Azanian National Youth Unity around 1985 injected

⁶⁶ PAC Archives: MC: Directive to APLA.

⁶⁷ T. Lodge: Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, p. 314.

⁶⁸ T. Lodge: ‘Soldiers of the Storm’, p. 106; T. Lodge: Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, p. 315.

⁶⁹ APLA Notes, Umtata, 24 June 1995.

the PAC with new life and also provided an active base inside South Africa. Its old underground networks were revived. Before the strategy of APLA, during the post Leballo era is examined, it would be useful to examine its command structure first, because it changed during Pokela's time and minor modifications were made again during the era of Johnson Mlambo.

Most importantly, in 1978, APLA's military strategy came under review, which led to the adoption of the "*New Road of Revolution*". The details of this new strategy are covered in the following sections of this chapter. The adoption of the "*New Road of Revolution*" was important in the strategic development of the PAC's military wing. One of the interviewees referred to it as the victory of "the Marxist-Leninists over the Maoists and nationalist elements in the PAC. The victory was short-lived and hollow because the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist faction was expelled during the Moshi Conference".⁷⁰ This was the Ntantala group, which later in 1979, formed the Azanian People's Revolutionary Party (APRP). The disagreements, which culminated in the expulsion of a faction of the PAC, especially members of the APLA High Command, were largely over military strategy and control of the army. The Arusha Conference brought no solution to the division as the events which occurred afterwards confirmed. The "*New Road of Revolution*" continued to be a strategy of the PAC's military but its Marxist-Leninist tone was surpassed by a Maoist emphasis. This continued until Leballo was deposed in May 1979. From that date followed a short period of rebellion within the army, as discussed in Chapter 4.

APLA's command structure up to 1978

As from 1968, APLA had a command structure "based on the Chinese concept and war strategy".⁷¹ In the TRC report it was argued that the command structure combined both elements of the PAC Constitution and "Chinese experience".⁷² The concept was premised on the idea of a Military Committee as the "principal organ of the Central Committee in the army".⁷³ The concept was adopted by the PAC "but with less care in the selection of personnel than in China where persons who served in this body were the most accomplished political and military cadres who handled the most complicated issues of the war plan, strategy, and the political line that was to guide the operations".⁷⁴ The Military Committee in the PAC was responsible for policy and its implementation in the recruit-

⁷⁰ APLA Notes, Pretoria, 7 January 2003.

⁷¹ APLA Notes, 21 December 2002.

⁷² TRC: *Report on PAC/Pogo/APLA*, p. 16.

⁷³ PAC Archives: MC: Directives to APLA, p. 8.

⁷⁴ TRC: *Report on PAC/Pogo/APLA*, p. 17.

ment, training and deployment of cadres. It had to ensure that the “war” establishment was built to meet the needs of the whole process of struggle. It consisted of the following key positions according to hierarchy and rank:

1. The Commander and his Deputy together with the Political Commissar and his Deputy;
2. The Chief of Staff and his Deputy together with the Political Director and his Deputy;
3. The Battalion Commander and his Deputy together with the Political Instructor and his Deputy and the Chief of Staff at Battalion Headquarters;
4. The Company Commander and his Deputy together with the Political Instructor and his Deputy, the Platoon Leader and his Deputy, the Squad Leader and his Deputy at Company Headquarters.⁷⁵

The chairman of the PAC Military Command until 1979 was P.K. Leballo, who was also the Commander-in-Chief of APLA forces as well as chairman of the organisation. The centralisation of political and military decision-making powers later became a source of internal conflict in the PAC. Because of the portfolios he held in the army, Leballo was able to justify his interference in the management of finances, as demonstrated in Chapter 4. A structure below the Military Committee was the High Command and was headed by T.M. Ntantala, who was also the Commander of the army and deputy-chairman of the PAC. The latter was a trained soldier from the Chinese Military Academy in Peking, Ghana and Algeria. This particular structure was manned by cadres and represented their interests. The High Command was represented by Ntantala in the Military Committee. Other members of the High Command were Gasson Ndlovu (Deputy Commander), P.Z. Mboko (Chief Political Commissar), Zeblon Mokoena (Deputy Chief Political Commissar and also a survivor of the Villa Peri Battle), Jack Jako (Head of Intelligence and Security) and Theophilus Bidi (Chief of Staff).⁷⁶

The interests represented in the Military Committee were not homogeneous. The agenda of the political leadership was in conflict with the strictly military agenda and interests of the army. Politicians wanted to make public statements about the sporadic military attacks whereas the army preferred to keep them a secret and also wanted to stick to the criteria defined in the strategy for a protracted people’s war.⁷⁷ Differences also existed

⁷⁵ PAC Archives: *MC: Directives to APLA*, p. 9.

⁷⁶ TRC: *Report on PAC/Poqo/APLA*, p. 17.

⁷⁷ APLA Notes, Umtata, 20 April 1996.

over the allocation of resources to the army. This situation exploded, in November 1977, when Leballo staged a coup against the High Command with the assistance of the new recruits who had joined APLA after the 1976 Soweto students' uprisings. The group of new recruits, based at the Itumbi camp, moved a motion against the majority decision of the Central Committee for the dissolution of the High Command and the appointment of a new one, which consisted of Leballo's loyalists, a move which was endorsed by the Arusha Conference in 1978.⁷⁸ As Gasson Ndlovu, the APRP's Secretary for Defence, recalled, "the real reasons (for the split) were ideological and are explained in the *"New Road of Revolution"*, which did not only re-chart the strategies, tactics and ideology in general we were going to follow, but also how we were going to conduct ourselves as individuals in that struggle, as the leaders we claimed we were".⁷⁹

The "New Road of Revolution"

The *"New Road of Revolution"*, referred to by the informant, was a document produced by APLA in 1975, re-charting the strategy of APLA and ideology of the PAC as a whole.⁸⁰ It was adopted by the PAC Central Committee in 1978 but its implementation was slowed down by the pervasive leadership conflicts which stifled activity in the PAC during Leballo's period of leadership.

The *"New Road of Revolution"* signalled an ideological shift in the PAC from the traditional emphasis on the peasantry to an acknowledgement of the vanguard role of the working-class, the urban-based proletariat in the South African revolution. As outlined in the document, "the working-class is the most military and revolutionary class in society. The very conditions of life of the working-class make it the most consistent and irreconcilable opponent of the capitalist order. Their position in production connects the workers with the future of the whole society".⁸¹ Even though the *"New Road of Revolution"* expressed a new Marxist-Leninist and Maoist turn in the ideology of the PAC, a similar emphasis on the peasantry was never abandoned during the time of Leballo. The latter pointed out that the same document also emphasised "the essence of revolution in the struggle of our people for national liberation is the people's armed insurgency - the agrarian revolution of the landless. It is the revolution of the landless peasants in the countryside and the landless labourers, who are employed on white farms, who must con-

⁷⁸ PAC Archives: Azanian People's Revolutionary Party (APRP): Crisis in the PAC, pp. 1–15; APRP: Nt-antala is gone; But his ideas will conquer, pp. 1–5.

⁷⁹ Interview conducted by Mxolisi Mgxashe, TRC Researcher, with Gasson Ndlovu, May 1997.

⁸⁰ PAC Archives: New Road of Revolution, pp. 1–3.

⁸¹ PAC Archives: New Road of Revolution, p. 69.

fiscate by force of arms, the present land held by white usurpers, for distribution among themselves”.⁸² Until he was deposed, Leballo tried to boost Maoism over Marxist-Leninism. He associated the latter with Ntantala’s faction. From the period of Make to that of Mlambo, there was an attempt to integrate and balance ideological positions within the organisation. The main ideological strands were African Nationalism and Maoism. From 1982, Marxism-Leninism revived its position with the re-instatement of Ntantala and his group. Hence, Benny Bunsec pointed out, in his letter to Henry Isaacs that “the organisational anarchy” that existed in the 1980s “in the PAC must be related to its ideological confusion”.⁸³ One is inclined to concur with this assertion given the fact that the ideological positions within the PAC seemed to remain disharmonised. Ideological splits therefore occurred and resulted in the formation of the Azanian People’s Revolutionary Party (APRP) in 1979 and the Sobukhwe Forum, led by nationalists in the PAC in 1989. Hence the notion of the “struggle of the two-ways” within the PAC, i.e. nationalists versus revolutionaries continued to characterise the PAC until 1990.⁸⁴ As indicated in a document produced by the APRP, the PAC’s ideology was “Marxism-Leninism, Maoism-Sobukhwe thought”.⁸⁵

What needs to be underlined here is that within APLA, heterogeneity (the essence of the human condition), prevailed, even though tightly squeezed beneath the rubric of instructions and power relations. It is still not clear whether the “*New Road of Revolution*” made any practical impact on the strategic direction of APLA. It can be deduced from existing evidence that the “*New Road of Revolution*” only brought into the ideological fold of the PAC aspects of Marxist-Leninist ideology. Hence, one of the interviewees for this research indicated that “when I was in jail with Sabelo Phama in Umtata in 1979, the man was speaking a new political language which was Marxist-Leninist; his ideological outlook was different from what it was the first time we talked politics”.⁸⁶

APLA command structure (1979–1990)

Between the 1st May 1979 and January 1981, the situation within APLA was chaotic. With the forced resignation of Leballo, cadres who supported his leadership were up-in- arms in the camps and unwilling to relent to a new political regime. This led to the intervention of Tanzanian troops to restore order in the PAC camps, especially at Chunya and Itumbi.

⁸² PAC Archives: *New Road of Revolution*, p. 59.

⁸³ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/77/23: Letter from Benny Bunsec to Henry Isaacs, n.d.1982.

⁸⁴ This is covered in detail in Chapter 4.

⁸⁵ PAC Archives: APRP: Ntantala Is Gone; But His Ideals Will Conquer, p. 2.

⁸⁶ Interview with Boy, Umtata, 21 April 1996.

The most important development is that this period marked a transition or shift in the PACs concept of the “army”. Even though no fundamental shift occurred in the military thinking of the army, a few changes occurred in the organisation of army structures. First, the concept of a Military High Command was replaced by a Task Force. The Task Force idea was initially introduced during the time of *Pogo*. The Military Committee as a structure in the army, was upheld. These changes emanated from open engagements between the PAC leadership, under Vusumzi Make, and the general cadreship in 1980. The hostilities to the new leadership had subsided and the daunting task of rebuilding the PAC was beginning to unite cadres in the camps. Their spirits were uplifted when the news of Pokela’s arrival was disclosed. He became the new chairman of the PAC and Commander-in-Chief of APLA from January 1981. He recruited fresh blood into the Task Force of APLA. Among the people recruited, was Sabelo Phama, who became Secretary for Defence and Commander of APLA. Others were Enoch Zulu, Morgan Gxekwa and Dan Mofokeng, who served as Chief of Operations, Chief of Staff and Chief Political Commissar respectively.⁸⁷ They were also members of the Military Committee which remained the key source of overall military strategy in the PAC. Another committee in charge of operational strategy was initiated, but the extent to which it functioned is not clear. It was called the Revolutionary Command Council and was constituted by a Chairman, Administrative Secretary, Defence Secretary, Director of Foreign Affairs, one other member of the Central Committee and the APLA Command Structure. This Committee was to see “to the scrupulous implementation of Party decisions” and was also to be the “brain tank or thinking or analyzing organ of the Party” on military matters.⁸⁸

The main function of the Task Force was “the re-building and restructuring of APLA”.⁸⁹ During the era of Pokela, the Task Force was enlarged as it incorporated more new members and its scope of activities was also broadened to include “contacting people home and intensifying the struggle. Its mandate was divided into the immediate, the short-term and the long-term objectives”.⁹⁰ The Task Force was only phased out in 1982 and the High Command was re-established.⁹¹ During this period, 1981-1985, the focus was more on re-organising the structures of APLA and less on developing or refining the strategies of ‘waging war’ in South Africa. During this time the PAC defined its “Home-Going

⁸⁷ TRC: Report on PAC/*Pogo*/APLA, p. 18.

⁸⁸ PAC Archives: Proposals for Organisation and Re-organisation of the PAC, 10 June 1981, p. 4.

⁸⁹ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/164/9: A document from PAC cadres to the Central Committee led by V. Make, n.d, p.8.

⁹⁰ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee Meeting at External Headquarters, Dar-es-Salaam, 1–7 December, 1982, p. 5.

⁹¹ PAC Archives: Meeting of the Central Committee, 21–25 August, 1982, p. 2.

Programme”.⁹² The PAC “Home-Going Programme” was premised on the idea that there were three things people at home wanted from the PAC i.e. “to send cadres home to train them militarily; arms for training and carrying out the programme; funds for self-help projects”.⁹³ The implementation of this programme was not successful during the time of Pokela; it was disrupted by the eruptions of internal quarrels within APLA. Internal splits emanated from the suspicion that members of the APRP, who were reinstated within APLA, were promoting a different agenda and had “their own home-going programme” outside the official PAC programme.⁹⁴ The mutual suspicion within the ranks of APLA was so endemic that it delayed military activity until the late 1980s. Another initiative of the Pokela leadership, to remedy the situation, was to establish a Defence Secretariat which was constituted by field persons to direct and co-ordinate the activities of APLA.⁹⁵ Available material does not make it possible to assess the extent to which all these structures improved the strategic focus of APLA during the era of Pokela. It nevertheless seems that they created a foundation for improved military action by APLA, during the late 1980s, as will be demonstrated in the latter sections of this chapter.

The death of Pokela ushered in a new era in the leadership of the PAC. This was the Era of Mlambo which brought with it a few modifications in the structures of APLA. From 1985 to 1990, the structure of APLA continued to uphold the Military Committee as the supreme policy-making body, and the Chairman of the PAC, (Johnson Mlambo), was the head. Other members of this body were Sabelo Phama (APLA Commander), Morgan Gxekwa (Chief of Staff), Dan Mofokeng (Chief Political Commissar), Joe Mkwanzazi (PAC Administrative Secretary) and Thobile Gola (PAC Chief Representative in East Africa).⁹⁶

The Military High Command was restructured with the following as Heads of Departments: Operations – Letlapa Mphahlele; Training and Manpower Development – Willie Nkonyeni; Military Intelligence – Raymond Fihla; Ordinance and Supply – Boy-Boy Mbete; Finance and Logistics – S. Kungwane; Personnel – A. Ntabeni; Health – T. Gumede; Ideological Training and Culture – Temba Ncaphayi; Mass Work – Rufus Zonyani; Information and Research – Wilberforce Zweni.⁹⁷

⁹² *Ibid.* p. 5; PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/79/18: Letter from Bunga Glen Mpukane to Joe Mkwanzazi, 1983.

⁹³ PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee Meeting at External Headquarters, Dar-es-Salaam, December 1–7, 1982, p. 6.

⁹⁴ PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/79/18: Letter from Bunga Glen Mpukane to Joe Mkwanzazi, 1983.

⁹⁵ PAC Archives: Proposals for Organisation and Re-organisation of the PAC, 10 June 1981, p. 3.

⁹⁶ Interview conducted by Mxolisi Mgxashe with Letlapa Mphahlele, former APLA Director of Operations, 1997; See also TRC: *Report on PAC/Poqo/APLA*, p. 18.

⁹⁷ TRC: *Report on PAC/Poqo/APLA*, p. 18.

What is interesting about the restructuring of APLA under Mlambo, was that civilian members of the PAC were allowed to occupy certain portfolios in the Military Committee. Joe Mkwanaazi was an example. Some departments, which were fused into the Military High Command, were led by civilians, for example the Information and Research Department. During this period debates and disagreements started looming within APLA, about defining the target of military attacks. The differences were mainly between the highly politicised and rather more cautious elite within APLA who the cadres collectively labelled as “politicians not soldiers” and the rank and file APLA cadres, some of whom were not “really that schooled”.⁹⁸ As reflected in the TRC report, there was some disagreement “on the political advisability of targeting the farmers and civilians in general and some people saw it as deviating from the basic plan of hitting the police, security forces and the army”.⁹⁹ The ‘elite’ within APLA departed from the premise that the ‘enemy’ could not be defined in terms of race, but rather in terms of a functional relationship to the Apartheid establishment, e.g. the police and the army.

The opposing line of argument advanced by militants within APLA was well articulated by Vuma Ntikinca, a former APLA operative in Transkei. He argued that “we had a specific political and military reason for concentrating on the farms. Militarily, we wanted to open up rural areas which would serve as an extended rear base from which we would be attacking the cities in a typical Maoist strategy of ‘encircling the cities from the countryside’. We were adamant in our argument that targeting white farms was in line with PAC’s basic struggle to ‘repossess the land’. Besides, the farmers had ceased, in our view, to being mere innocent ordinary civilians. They were part of a very strong and well armed white civilian detachment of the South African Defence Force. Each farmer had licence to carry up to 14 pieces of weapons”.¹⁰⁰ This tension was to manifest itself explicitly during the many APLA attacks launched from inside South Africa after 1990.¹⁰¹ It was during this period that APLA extended its command structures inside South Africa. An internal High Command under the leadership of Enoch Zulu was set up. The internal High Command was further divided into ten military regions and each region fell under a regional command structure.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Interview with D.D.D. Mantshontsho, Umtata, 21 June 1995.

⁹⁹ TRC: Report on PAC/*Pogo*/APLA, p. 23.

¹⁰⁰ Interview Conducted by Mxolisi Mgxashe with Vuma Ntikinca, Umtata, May 1997.

¹⁰¹ For more detail see Tom Lodge: “Soldiers of the Storm: A Profile of the Azanian People’s Liberation Army”, pp. 105–117; Tom Lodge: “The Long March: The Story of the Struggle for Liberation in South Africa”, pp. 104–123; South African Police: Location of APLA camps, arms, ammunition, personnel and operational activities, pp. 1–55.

¹⁰² South African Police: Location of APLA camps, arms, ammunition, personnel and operational activities, p. 11.

From 1985, there were several attempts by APLA cadres to infiltrate South Africa, but they were not successful in executing the strategies they had designed as outlined in internal PAC documents. These attempts began in September 1985 and were repeated in April 1986 but both failed. Another attempt was made in February 1987, when APLA launched attacks in South Africa “in the guise of the Scorpion Gang”.¹⁰³ Again, on the 22 April 1987, APLA claimed responsibility for a grenade attack on municipal police which killed one policeman and injured 64 others in Soweto.¹⁰⁴ APLA’s journal, *Azania Combat* claimed that 12 “enemy” agents were killed and 67 wounded in the attack.¹⁰⁵ By 1988, “APLA operations had extended to smaller towns in the Western Transvaal. At the close of the decade APLA had become a significant participant in South Africa’s fledgling guerrilla war”.¹⁰⁶

In summary, this chapter has attempted to traverse difficult terrain about the development of the military strategy of the PAC from 1960 to 1990. The subject is broad and complex and might probably require a book on its own. Initially, (i.e. 1960 to 1967) the military strategy of the PAC was not recorded, standardised and refined. It was without a clear theoretical framework but was premised on traditional forms of resistance and sought immediate results. The persons involved hardly conceived of the liberation struggle in South Africa as a process which was likely to be drawn-out over a long period of time. As Madasa, one of the interviewees indicated “we wanted independence now not tomorrow and we all sacrificed for it”.¹⁰⁷ From this approach to the liberation struggle emerged the tendency to exalt action over planning, practice over theory and immediacy of results over long-term benefits. This was the kind of military culture which was carried over to what was supposedly the “new” era of APLA, from 1968 onwards. The post-1968 period, during which Leballo charted the ideological tenets of a new strategy premised on the Chinese Maoist experience, could not root-out the *Pogo* traditions, especially at the level where implementation of strategy was a priority. Instead, the Maoist inclination of Leballo’s leadership split ideological opinions within the PAC into three, i.e. the nationalists, Maoists and an emerging Marxist-Leninist tendency which was later epitomised by the “*New Road of Revolution*” in 1978. The extent to which the strategies, which appeared good on paper, were translated into the practices of the organisation is not clear. From available evidence, it appears as though the area of implementation of strategies, policies and procedures was a major problem in the PAC. The post-Leballo period, 1979 to 1990,

¹⁰³ *The Star International*, 28 February, 1987.

¹⁰⁴ *The Independent*, 22 April, 1987.

¹⁰⁵ PAC Archives: *Azania Combat*, no. 4, 1987, p. 3.

¹⁰⁶ T. Lodge: *Soldiers of the Storm*, p. 108.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Mr Madasa, Langa, 3 September 1987.

was a short period to undo the legacy he created over the period of 17 years during which he was the chairman of the PAC. Numerous attempts were made, by his successors, to improve the situation within the army. The army was divided on matters of strategy and ideology. The post-1976 Soweto uprisings brought into the PAC a new generation of recruits, better educated and theoretically advanced than the *Pogo* group. The events of 1984 to 1986 inside South Africa also brought to the PAC another generation of recruits, more militant and really desperate for liberation. It needed firm and strategic leadership to blend these three traditions into a harmonious unity. The PAC lacked this kind of leadership. Instead, the leaders were themselves consumed in leadership power battles and had limited time to devote to addressing the problems of the army. Hence, at the time the PAC was unbanned, it seemed as though the army was accountable more to its commanders than to the predominantly civilian political leadership.

9 PAC Unbanned. Dealing with the Negotiated Transition to Democracy (1990–1994)

The period 1990–1994 was probably the most politically dramatic period, filled with frequent and fundamental changes. Analysing the events during this uncertain period proved to be a complex process. This was the period of transitional negotiations and a re-alignment of interest groups and political forces occurring after the release of Nelson Mandela from prison until after the April 1994 democratic elections. These developments placed the liberation movements under pressure and created a situation, which appeared like a strategic cul-de-sac. If negotiations were about “give and take”, what was to be “given” and what “taken” during this process? The liberation movements handled the situation differently with varying degrees of success and failure. The ANC, despite the fact that its strategic thrust and orientation to the liberation struggle had been based on the possible resolution of the liberation struggle through negotiated compromise, was caught off-guard by the swift moves of FW de Klerk, the last President of apartheid South Africa, during this period. As Dale Mckinley correctly puts it, “the ANC might have been at the apex of its international and domestic moral authority, but in the harsh world of realpolitik,”¹ it appeared to be in a weak position. FW de Klerk, on the other hand, “had a strong hand and his first play was to call the ANC’s bluff”.² Thereafter, he kept the strategic upper hand in orienting the direction of change.

The ANC released its blueprint for a negotiated settlement through the adoption of the Harare Declaration in August 1989. In September 1989 the PAC “distanced itself from the Harare Declaration adopted by the OAU as their position paper on resolving conflict in South Africa”.³ Thus started the long journey of diametrically opposed views between the PAC. This lasted until the end of 1993. The ANC had started as early as 1989 to prepare its constituency. It presented negotiations as both a “new terrain of struggle”, and a position which could not be reversed. The ANC now de-emphasised an insurrectionary vision; negotiations were paraded as the most realistic option. The apartheid government was aware of the limitations and possibilities of the ANC’s strategic stance. As one SACP stalwart in-

¹ D.T Mckinley: *The ANC and the Liberation Struggle – A Critical Political Biography*, Pluto Press, London, 1997, p. 104.

² D.T Mckinley: *The ANC and the Liberation Struggle*, p. 104.

³ C.Cooper: *Race Relations Survey, 1989/90*, South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg, 1990, p. 741.

licated, “in the same way we infiltrated the system, it also infiltrated the ANC”.⁴ The ANC claimed to be aware of the apartheid regime’s limitations and spaces of manoeuvre during negotiations. Strategically the balance of forces had reached an awkward equilibrium. The other critical player after the ANC, but fairly unknown to the National Party government, was the PAC. The government’s perception, based on research by scholars in South Africa was that in the late 1980s the PAC was still recovering from its turbulent past. It was not yet clear whether the PAC were in a weaker position than the ANC in terms of internal popular support and international “solidarity” networks.

The PAC was ideologically strong with an African nationalist ideological vision more radical than that of the ANC. As an organisation though, the PAC was not very viable. It lacked resources both in terms of strategic leadership, financial resources and was still recovering from the 17 years of internal strife under Leballos’s leadership. The rescue mission by John Nyathi Pokela (1981–1985) did not help much to improve the situation in the organisation. Pokela’s premature death created a vacuum, in terms of both leadership skills and charisma. He died at the point when his role was beginning to have an impact both within the organisation and in the international community. His successor, Chairman Johnson Mlambo geared the organisation for “war” through his “home-returning” programme, discussed in Chapter 6B. This occurred as the international community and leading role-players in South African politics were promoting the idea of a negotiated solution. The impression created was of an organisation strategically “out of step” with real political changes in South Africa. Under Johnson Mlambo, the PAC wanted to “catch-up” with lost opportunities on the diplomatic front as well as in its military programme. When the organisation was unbanned, this program had just started, a new context in global and South African politics had, however, developed and rendered the “war” programme completely irrelevant.

The address by F.W. de Klerk to Parliament on 2 February 1990, in which he announced the unbanning of all liberation movements, as well as the release of Nelson Mandela, expressed “both the apartheid state’s and capital’s desire to seize the strategic initiative of a process which could lead to deracialised capitalism”⁵. This created an awkward situation for exile South African liberation movements. De Klerk went further to set the parameters of the post-apartheid dispensation in South Africa. He indicated, in his speech, that the new South Africa will have “a new democratic constitution, universal franchise, no domination, equality before an independent judiciary; protection of minorities as well as individual rights, freedom of religion, a sound economy based on proven

⁴ Informal conversation with SACP stalwart, Cape Town, February 1991.

⁵ D.T Mckinely: *The ANC and the Liberation Struggle*, p. 103.

economic principles and private enterprise, dynamic programmes directed at better education, health services, housing and social conditions for all”.⁶ These parameters formed the bedrock of discussions during the negotiations and informed the scope of national policy in the new dispensation. This was a challenge to the PAC. Its orientation towards “revolution and revolutionary change” was a problem. The period was one of “political accommodation” and dialogue. Organisations which could not read and understand the “spirit of the period” rendered themselves irrelevant. The PAC failed to balance the commitment to a “revolutionary path of change” with the diplomatic imperatives of the negotiated transition. This is where it failed and as a result lost the support of the masses in the run-up to the 1994 elections.

The PAC on the eve of the unbanning of liberation movements in South Africa

An interesting question to examine is whether the PAC was alert to the possibilities of looming negotiations and unbanning of liberation movements, especially during the second half of the 1980s? If it was, then how did it prepare itself to handle this possibility? The ANC was clearly aware of this possibility but what it did not anticipate was the pace and content of the changes. It was therefore unable to present an integrated strategic conception of how to handle the transitional negotiations and the violence affecting black communities during this period. The ANC’s National Executive Committee statement of 9 October 1987, “The Question of Negotiations” broadly set out the disposition of the ANC to negotiate whilst intensifying the struggle on all fronts⁷. The Harare Declaration and the ANC Constitutional Guidelines emerged out of this document and became the ANC’s negotiations strategy framework. The PAC position during the years immediately preceding the unbanning and transitional negotiations remains unclear.

Available evidence reveals the PAC was fully aware of the possibilities of a negotiated settlement. In 1988 the PAC office in Dar-Es-Salaam produced a position paper, “Some Considerations in Respect of the so-called Dialogue with White Ruled South Africa Through its Government”. The document is long and rhetorical. It begins, “there is much talk in the air. This talk concerns the possibility of a dialogue between the government of white-ruled South Africa and the African National Congress. The talk of such talk was

⁶ De Klerk, FW: Address by State President FW de Klerk at the opening of the second session of the 9th Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, Friday, 2 February, 1990, Daily Dispatch Archives, East London; C.Cooper, etal: Race Relations Survey 1989/90, South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg, 1990, p.xli

⁷ D.T Mckinely: The ANC and the Liberation Struggle, pp. 88–89.

heralded by Oliver Tambo in East Africa. The Tambo's tune was picked up by the honorable Pik Botha somewhere in Germany where he sang the tune, saying that if the African National Congress dropped its armed struggle programme, the South African government would be prepared to unban the ANC, and all ANC exiles would be free to return to South Africa and talk 'peace, perfect peace'. The refrain of the Oliver Tambo-Pik Botha song was picked up by the liberal press and orchestrated by the sanctified mouthpiece of the 'verligte' Afrikaner volk. *De Beeld* and the glamorous group joined in a chorus of singular unanimity and sang the praisings of dialogue"⁸. The PAC's regard of the prospects of a negotiated settlement seem to have been dismissive and was premised on the hope that negotiations would fail. The PAC document continues, "in all this the PAC was excluded. Perhaps it was thought that the PAC lacked a choir uniform beautiful enough to entitle it to join the 'great' chorus. In all the circumstances it is clear that the PAC is ignorant of all these talks about talks. In other words the PAC knows nothing about anything. In their words the PAC is entitled to go on, and on, and on, as if nothing happened".⁹

The paper criticizes "some black states which stand in fear of white South Africa's military machine, and which stand trembling before the United States colossus which threatens to starve them out unless they crawled on their bellies and licked the boots of Reagan. Some of these black states are among the so-called front-line states and they dread the spectre of indirect involvement in an armed struggle by way of PAC's passing of men and weapons through their countries to reach the hot spot – that is to say fascist, racist white South Africa. These states might confront the PAC to find out what PAC meant to do about armed struggle in face of the rampant talks of peace and reconciliation between the government of white-ruled South Africa and the African National Congress".¹⁰ This was spot on because two years later, in December 1990, after preliminary negotiations had started, the PAC was advised by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to stop "the war-talk", to talk peace and give negotiations a chance.¹¹ In fact, a year later, the ZANU-PF government in Zimbabwe (a long-time ally of the PAC), issued a statement in which it stopped the PAC from issuing statements on violence from its territory.¹² In the same vein the OAU, whilst encouraging negotiated transition, did not respond to the request of the South African government to stop all material support for the PAC and APLA, fol-

⁸ PAC: Some Considerations in Respect of the so-called Dialogue with White Ruled South Africa Through its Government, Tanzania, 1988, p. 2.

⁹ PAC: Some Considerations in Respect of the so-called Dialogue with White Ruled South Africa Through its Government, Tanzania, 1988.

¹⁰ PAC: Some Considerations in Respect of the so-called Dialogue with White Ruled South Africa, p. 3

¹¹ Daily Dispatch, 9 December, 1990, Archives of the Daily Dispatch, East London.

¹² Daily Dispatch, 2 December 1992, Archives of the Daily Dispatch, East London.

lowing the submissions made to the Goldstone Commission of enquiry into the location of APLA camps, arms, ammunition and operations in January 1993.¹³

The PAC position paper raises questions about the possibility that, at some point, the PAC could be approached directly by the ANC and government with the request to join the negotiations or to declare categorically its position on the “dialogue”. The paper argues that the “PAC as an organisation which is not in the Dialogue exercise and which has been discounted completely in regard to any rapprochement between the ANC and the Nationalist Party fascist government, is fully entitled to keep its peace, and refuse to answer any questions put by the parties (the ANC and the NP white government) that declared to the whole world that they were prepared to go into Dialogue on terms that were kept secret from the world”.¹⁴ To the community of African countries the document suggested that the PAC “is entitled to enquire of such states how they are concerned in the issue of Dialogue between the African National Congress and the South African white state; and also enquire of them whether or not they are running before they were chased?”.¹⁵

The position document made provision for issues that would inform the PAC’s engagement with the ANC and NP government, should it choose to respond to the invitation to participate in the negotiations. These included the terms of reference and “agenda of talks”; whether talks were to be about the dismantlement of the apartheid state and the resolution of the national question on a democratic basis; whether talks would include the inauguration of a new order “in which democratic power will be placed irrevocably in the hands of the people of Azania, on the basis of one man, one vote”, irrespective of race, colour or creed; “whether or not the wealth of Azania and fruits of the labour of people of Azania – especially the ruthlessly oppressed and exploited Black African millions – will be fully controlled by the people and exploited for equal benefit of all the people on a democratic basis”.¹⁶

The paper framed the PAC’s response to the negotiations. It further contributed in the development of the PAC official position on negotiations at a meeting of the PAC Central Committee in Dar es Salaam between the 18th and 24th September 1989. At the meeting, “it was resolved that negotiations at this formative stage of our struggle will not usher in desired goals of the struggle – namely, the restoration of the usurped land and fundamental rights of self-determination and the full exercise of the fundamental principle of one person, one vote for a one chamber parliament in a unitary state. It was resolved

¹³ Daily Dispatch, 4 January, 1993, Archives of the Daily Dispatch, East London.

¹⁴ PAC: Some Considerations in Respect of the so-called Dialogue with White Ruled South Africa Through its Government, Tanzania, 1988, p. 5

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 4

¹⁶ PAC: Some Considerations in Respect of the so-called Dialogue with White Ruled South Africa Through its Government, Tanzania, 1988, p. 6

that the PAC responsibility is to increase the fighting capacity of the people ideologically, organisationally and militarily. The Central Committee also reiterated the call for intensified sanctions and all forms of international pressures to isolate the apartheid regime".¹⁷

This sets the background of the PAC's responses; firstly, to the unbanning of liberation movements, secondly, to the question of negotiations and thirdly, its views on a future democratic order in South Africa. This dispels the myth created in some circles and sometimes media, that the PAC was without position or had not thought through the possibilities of a negotiated settlement. The organisation anticipated the situation but the debates on the negotiated settlement and competing views on how to respond to it had not matured or filtered down to the grassroots of the organisation. Most importantly, the PAC's position on negotiations was not articulated in such a way that it won popular support of a cross-section of the South African population.

The PAC's response to the unbanning of liberation movements

The PAC immediately responded to the unbanning by saying that "the unbanning of the ANC, PAC and SACP has no meaning to them" and called for "the struggle to be intensified in all fronts".¹⁸ The spokesman of the PAC in exile, Cutter Seleka stated, "we have not, for the past 30 years, recognised the banning of our organisations and therefore Friday's announcement means nothing to us. We make a clarion call to our people to intensify the struggle on all fronts. We also urge members of the international community to be always vigilant to President de Klerk, George Bush and Margaret Thatcher's manipulations, so as not to withdraw the weapon of sanctions".¹⁹ He maintained that the PAC's demand was the return of land to its rightful owners and the establishment of a socialist order. This was confirmed by the President of the PAC, Zephania Mothopeng who responded, "as far as we are concerned we do not recognise this government and therefore do not recognise the banning of the PAC. It is meaningless. There might be activities which can be undertaken overtly now, but effectively the unbanning will make little difference to our program".²⁰ In the same interview Mothopeng indicated that it was up to PAC individuals in exile to decide whether to return to South Africa or not. "There are some people who are now stranded, old or sick and nothing should stop them if they want to come".²¹

¹⁷ PAC: Minutes – Central Committee Meeting, 18-24 September, 1989, p. 1.

¹⁸ Star, 5 February, 1990, Archives of the Daily Dispatch, East London; C. Cooper et al: Race Relations Survey 1989/90, South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg, 1990, p. 741.

¹⁹ C. Cooper et al: Race Relations Survey 1989/90, South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg, 1990, p. 741.

²⁰ Weekly Mail: Interview with Mr Zeph Mothopeng, PAC President, 9 February, 1990.

²¹ *Ibid.*

Mothopeng was consistent in his pre-1990 position that the negotiated settlement in South Africa, will eventually create “an elite which would effectively exclude the African worker”.²² These views disclose both firm suspicion about the agenda of transitional negotiations, on the one hand and on the other, an organisational state of “unreadiness” to enter into a political deal outside the originally conceived strategies of “nationalist” revolution. De Klerk’s swift political moves during this period also caused more suspicion and caught the PAC off-guard. Besides that the leadership of the PAC had not developed flexible policy positions to anticipate future scenarios of the liberation struggle. A negotiated settlement, even if from a position of weakness, is one such scenario an organisation with serious strategic capabilities would have anticipated, especially given the power vacuum created by the collapse of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s. The statements of the PAC leadership during this period make clear that they never accorded the new reality of negotiated political change and the role of the international community in it, the weight and urgency they deserved. The organisation was stuck in the rhetoric of its ideology and approach to the liberation struggle despite clear shifts in positions among national and international roleplayers to seek solution through dialogue.

Responses by the PAC to De Klerk’s February 2 speech were not homogenous. The speech by Barney Desai (a PAC exile who returned to South Africa soon after the unbanning of the PAC in February 1990), showed another perspective in PAC interpretation of the situation when he argued at a conference in Bloemfontein, that “the press informs us that the PAC rejects negotiations. This is a blatant lie because no other than President Mothopeng is on record as stating in Harare that the PAC was prepared to discuss with interested parties the establishment of a constituent assembly to draw up a new constitution on the basis of one person one vote”.²³ He went on to say, “I wish to caution my brothers and sisters that the slogan of ‘one settler one bullet’ is not consistent with our stated aims. No mature liberation movement has ever had as its stated policy an intention to drive the white people into the sea”.²⁴

This can be interpreted as a sign of underlying contradictions, simmering tensions and competing political views on negotiations about future dispensation within the unbanned PAC. It eventually emerged that there was a “political centre” within the PAC, constituted mostly by the “intellectuals” in the organisation. The intellectuals and some “elites” in the PAC, saw in the unbanning and political negotiations limited space to advance the positive aspirations of the liberation struggle. The “centre” faction in the PAC

²² C. Cooper et al: Race Relations Survey 1989/90, p.741; Sowetan, 20 November, 1989.

²³ Argus, 13 March 1990.

²⁴ Ibid.

was numerically insignificant compared to the radical “left” majority, but commanded strong influence. The PAC ultimately joined the multi-party negotiations table in 1993. Barney Desai’s speech demonstrates that the political centre within the PAC was indeed cautious, if not worried about the “war rhetoric” and militant slogans which were part of the populism of the PAC after 1990. The intensification of APLA guerrilla activities inside South Africa from February 1991 and the declaration by Sabelo Phama, PAC Secretary for Defence, that the year 1993 was the “Year of the Great Storm”, at a point when negotiations were making slow but significant advances, did not enjoy the support of all sections of the PAC.²⁵ It alienated the PAC from important constituencies in civil society (e.g. certain churches and organisations), whose support it was going to need during the elections in April 1994. This will be examined in the sections below where competing views within the PAC on the negotiated settlement are covered.

The PAC and the negotiated political settlement

The ambiguity of the PAC’s responses to the question of a negotiated political settlement in South Africa and its strategy to intensify APLA military attacks once transitional negotiations had started, contributed to a dented public image and eventual loss of support for the PAC, as shown during the 1994 elections. The organisation was publicly cast as unreasonable when several invitations to participate in multi-party negotiations, from the National Party government, the ANC and church organisations, were not heeded by its leadership on the basis of what appeared to be elusive ideological arguments from the PAC. It can be argued that the PAC lost an opportunity to make its own contribution, to put its own ideological stamp at the “foundational moment” of liberal democracy in South Africa. When it joined the negotiations in 1993, the PAC had lost significant ground due to growing perceptions that its militancy was “unreasonable”, at a time when negotiations with the apartheid government needed to be given a chance. Besides that, the tone of the negotiation process had already been defined by the ANC and the National Party government.

The essence of the PAC’s position on a negotiated political settlement in South Africa was summarised by Patricia de Lille, Executive Committee member of the PAC – internal, at a press conference in Gugulethu Township in Cape Town on March 13, 1990, “the PAC still stands by its decision three decades ago that freedom can be won only through the armed struggle because there is nowhere in history where the oppressors have

²⁵ Memorandum submitted by the South African Police to the Commission of Enquiry Regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation – Location of APLA Camps, Arms, Ammunition, Personnel and Operational Activities, Port Elizabeth, 4 January, 1993.

negotiated themselves out of power”.²⁶ Whilst this may sound too much like a slogan or ideological stance, the PAC’s official letter to the Organisation of African Unity, dated 13 March 1990, elaborated on De Lille’s position.²⁷ The letter does not convey the impression that the PAC opposed negotiations, however did state the preconditions to negotiations, the PAC wished to implement. The letter called for “the elections – one person, one vote in a common voter’s roll – of a constituent assembly that will be empowered to draw up South Africa’s post apartheid constitution”.²⁸

The PAC indicated in the letter that the five political pillars of apartheid are not negotiable, i.e. the Population Registration Act, 1950; Land Acts, 1913 and 1936; the Bantu Education Act, 1953; the South African Constitution Act 1983 (establishing the tri-cameral parliament) and the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act 1959 and other legislation relating to the black homelands. Lastly, the PAC indicated in its letter that the important leverage of the armed struggle and sanctions must not be compromised or abandoned.²⁹ Whilst this seemed to be the official position of the PAC on negotiations, the public utterances by the PAC President, Zeph Mothopeng, continued to raise questions and create confusion around the PAC’s position on negotiations. The interview he gave with the *City Press* in June 1990 created more confusion and did not do any good in the efforts to strengthen public understanding and confidence in the PAC. Mothopeng argued that from the time the PAC was established it never recognised the government, “so the question of negotiations does not arise. The question is one of the repossession of our land from foreign colonial oppressors. It has nothing to do with negotiations”.³⁰

What is interesting in the PAC position on negotiations is the tendency to “seek location in the history” of the party; the tendency to invoke the history of the organisation as the reason for adopting certain positions in the present as if the organisation’s history was uncontested. This shows how iron clad interpretations of PAC ideology created a problem for the organisation at the most decisive moment in the history of South Africa. The historical war for the return of ancestral land even though justified, was made to appear context transcendent and inflexible. Young African intellectuals within the PAC, who shared the same history in the organisation, invoked the organisation’s history as a reason why there was a need for innovative strategic positions to deal with the challenges of a negotiated political arrangement in South Africa.

²⁶ Muslim Views, 13 March 1990.

²⁷ Front File, April 1990.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Front File, April 1990.

³⁰ City Press, 10 June 1990.

Key persons among these young intellectuals were Peter Mayende, Vuyisile Dlova, Siphso Shabalala (all university professors) and Dikgang Moseneke (now Deputy Chief Justice of South Africa). Most importantly, Peter Mayende (Secretary for Land and later Technical Advisor to the PAC negotiating team during the transitional negotiations) and Siphso Shabalala (Internal Secretary for Economic affairs) generated policy position papers, some of which informed legislative frameworks in the new dispensation. The White Paper on Land Policy and particularly the structure of the Commission on Restitution of Land Rights seem to have been informed by the Land and Agriculture policy of the PAC.³¹ The policy position paper was the brainchild of Gilingwe Peter Mayende, who produced the final document for the PAC. In October 1993 the PAC through its Department of Land and Agricultural Affairs, published the blueprint policy document. Peter Mayende was later absorbed into the new Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs by the Mandela administration after the 1994 elections. It was clear to the parties involved in negotiations in 1993 that despite the political disunity the PAC responses conveyed to the public, it had intellectual capacity which could benefit the negotiations process. The PAC proposals for a constituent assembly, tabled on 5 October 1990, demonstrated that the organisation had “intellectual capacity”, even though it was clouded by the militancy and rhetoric of the majority.

The young intellectuals in the PAC represented the “source” of new strategic thinking in the PAC after it was unbanned in 1990. These are the people who, through their writing skills, publications, debates and lobbying, eventually influenced the PAC to join the negotiations. Some did this literally risking their lives, as militancy and unguided radicalism was slowly growing into a very serious problem in the PAC. Benny Alexander referred to this phenomenon in the PAC. In December 1991 Benny Alexander wrote that the PAC has, “a lost generation of angry, aimless youth who cannot get a job, and because of that they have a tremendous sense of recklessness, and because of that you find they are all coming to the PAC”.³² At that time the effects of rational intellectual arguments were beginning to influence the shift in position within the PAC. Of course, there were other external factors which pushed the PAC towards negotiations, especially the role of Zimbabwe, the OAU and the international community.

The discussion paper on “*Negotiations in South Africa*” by Vuyisile Dlova, early in 1990 (still lecturing at Brunel University in England), is a good example of the new thinking or “dissenting” that was beginning to emerge after 1990. He debates the question whether

³¹ Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) of Azania: The Land and Agriculture Policy of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, Department of Land and Agricultural Affairs, PAC Headquarters, Johannesburg, October 1993.

³² Daily Dispatch, 20, December 1991, Archives of the Daily Dispatch, East London.

“any liberation movement can opt out” of negotiations, “and hope to play a central role in the running of the country in the foreseeable future”.³³ He challenged the key PAC viewpoint that “any negotiations, given the military position between the dispossessed African majority and the White government would be a contention between a master and a slave”.³⁴ He argued that the history of guerrilla warfare in situations of national liberation has taught people that most guerrilla victories “have come about *not* when guerrillas assumed military superiority, rather when their opponents lost the stamina to fight. While the military position of the SA government looks impregnable, South Africa has lost all hope to win peace through military muscle in South Africa”.³⁵ Dlova emphasised that the rapprochement between the Soviet Union and the United States of America is an important factor and meant that the resolution of the South African problem was a superpower priority. “These factors combined, offset military advantage and also favour Africans”.³⁶ The discussion paper further cautioned that the PAC might find itself isolated should other liberation movements and black organisations decide to proceed without it, the PAC may not have “sufficient military and political clout to frustrate the process of negotiations, and seize power in the foreseeable future”.³⁷ The last section of the discussion document deals with “what needs to be done” and goes on to advise that the “PAC needs to reverse its unrealistic stand on negotiations. It can use the opportunity offered by the de Klerk declaration on this issue”.³⁸ The PAC was advised not to set preconditions for negotiations, except for those necessary to start the process, such as the release of political prisoners and the return of exiles. On the the suspension of the armed struggle, the PAC was advised to debate it in the negotiations forum.

This document influenced views and attitudes, especially within the ranks of the leadership of the PAC towards negotiations. From June 1990, attitudes towards negotiations in the PAC were beginning to change. On June 11 1990, the Secretary-General of the PAC, Benny Alexander unveiled an economic policy document, developed by Siphoshe Shabalala, titled “*The Economic Policy of the PAC: An exploratory, diagnostic and contingency exposition*”. It was at that forum where he indicated that the PAC had “failed to overthrow the South African state through revolutionary means. The most important thing to consider, with respect to the political dispensation taking place in occupied Azania, is that whatever will be the outcome of a negotiated political accord, the Africans sooner

³³ V. Dlova: ‘Negotiations in South Africa, Brunel University, UK, 1990, p. 1.

³⁴ *Ibid.* p. 1.

³⁵ V. Dlova: Negotiations in South Africa, Brunel University, UK, 1990, p. 1.

³⁶ *Ibid.* p. 1.

³⁷ V. Dlova: Negotiations in South Africa, Brunel University, UK, 1990, p.1.

³⁸ *Ibid.* p. 1.

or later will be the beneficiaries”.³⁹ The document argued that the political change which had taken place in the country since February 2 1990, “was irreversible, and this was one of the strengths of the liberation movement”.⁴⁰ But the “Mothopeng factor” i.e. the populist position of the PAC President Zeph Mothopeng, together with the militaristic solutions of the PAC army, APLA, remained a constraint to change in the PAC position on negotiations.

The signing of the Pretoria Minute on August, 6 1990 between the ANC and the De Klerk government entrenched negative views in the dominant factions of the PAC towards negotiations. The ANC decided to suspend the armed struggle after the Pretoria Minute, something which caused confusion and discontent, first, within Umkhonto weSizwe (the ANC guerrilla wing) and second, among the broad support- base of the ANC. An impression was emerging that De Klerk was calling the tune in the negotiated transition. Hence the PAC President announced that “the PAC position for talks remains a firm, principled commitment by the government to the following: majority rule, redistribution of the country’s resources and a constituent assembly based on one-person, one-vote on a common voters’ roll”.⁴¹ The impression created by the Pretoria Minute, that PAC exiles and political prisoners would be denied indemnity until the organisation joined the ANC in suspending the armed struggle, added to the PAC’s reservations and rejection of negotiations. Zeph Mothopeng argued that he was aware of the fact that “PAC prisoners would be disadvantaged”.⁴² He went on to say, “as the PAC was not party to yesterday’s talks, we are not bound by its decisions. We will continue with the struggle in all fronts, including the armed struggle, and our membership is prepared to pay the ultimate sacrifice for what we believe is morally right, even if it means going to the gallows”.⁴³

According to Zeph Mothopeng, the ceasefire agreement entered into by the ANC was not in line with the preconditions set by the OAU’s Harare Declaration. The ANC suspended the armed struggle unilaterally in the interests of moving as speedily as possible towards a negotiated peaceful political settlement. This was a tactical compromise by the leadership of the ANC to increase the momentum towards a negotiated solution. This caused consternation within the ranks of the ANC and its supporters and put the ANC in a corner when the wave of covert state-sponsored violence, the ‘third force’, suddenly engulfed Johannesburg’s black townships. The Institute for Black Research indicates that

³⁹ Argus, 11 June, 1990.

⁴⁰ Argus, 11 June, 1990.

⁴¹ City Press, 12 August, 1990.

⁴² Daily Mail, 7 August, 1990.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

over a period of ten days, more than 500 people died.⁴⁴ “Having no other recourse, the ANC leadership announced the suspension of talks with government”.⁴⁵ This delayed the negotiations for almost a year. Incidents of state-sponsored violence in the townships increased over this period. The limited benefit of the ceasefire compromise made by the ANC was the state’s agreement to release political prisoners no later than the 30 April 1991 and review security legislation. The government was not in a hurry to comply with or meet any conditions of the agreements; there was a serious gap between what was promised and the concessions made. During this period of suspension of talks the PAC continued to attack the idea of a negotiated transition to democracy. The radicals within the PAC felt vindicated by political developments, which led to the suspension of negotiations. At that point, mid-October 1990, Zeph Mothopeng died after a long illness. Clarence Makwethu, his Deputy, was elected President of the PAC at the December Conference of the PAC. He inherited and led a deeply divided PAC, divided by the turbulent history of exile, by participation in negotiations and by the forthcoming 1994 election. Some members felt the PAC should position itself as a “revolutionary movement” outside parliamentary politics. The PAC eventually secured 2% of the vote in the national elections of 1994.

The formation of Township Defence Committees and Township Defence Forces, mid-1991, by the ANC’s military wing Umkhonto weSizwe, encouraged the PAC to stick to its position of not suspending the armed struggle. The leadership of the ANC, despite the orientation towards militancy among its township supporters, continued to express commitment to the negotiation process. This commitment received the endorsement of the December 1990 National Consultative Conference as well as the July 1991 ANC National Congress.

During the mass protests and marches led by the ANC in 1991, the PAC was not as visible as many people expected. The ANC marches during the “revolutionary zig-zag”.⁴⁶ Period lasting until the formal announcement of the meeting of the Congress for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), in December 1991, played an important role in shaping public perceptions of the numerical strength and popularity of the organisation. It was the assassination of Chris Hani, Secretary General of the South African Communist Party in 1993 that brought an end to what would have been protracted negotiations. It provided the liberation movements with a renewed moral authority and exposed the moral bankruptcy of the government led by FW de Klerk and underlined the fact that if

⁴⁴ Institute for Black Research: The Codesa File – Negotiating a Non-Racial democracy in South Africa, Madiba Publishers, Durban, 1993.

⁴⁵ D.T. Mckinly: The ANC and the Liberation Struggle, p. 111.

⁴⁶ D.T. Mckinly: The ANC and the Liberation Struggle, p. 111.

political changes did not happen fast, South Africa was sitting on a “ticking-time bomb” of popular insurrection.

The PAC did not utilise the opportunities created by these incidents to its advantage. That was the time to publicly display the PAC’s numerical strength, to mould and influence popular perceptions. It is this weakness which contributed to the dismal performance of the PAC in the 1994 elections. The PAC failed to capitalise on disenchantment with the ANC’s decision to suspend the armed struggle, the subsequent increase in state-sponsored violence in the townships and the arrogance displayed by FW de Klerk’s government to broaden its constituency and “swing the mood among people along the anti-negotiations path”.⁴⁷ It missed the opportunity to display the much needed public attributes, those of an organisation that belongs to “all”, an organisation that can visibly deploy its military and leadership resources to the defence of the “people”. This was the language which framed the dominant discourse during the transition period; the political discourse fetishized an undefined “we”; an undefined “people” and an elusive “all”. These are the nuances of populist politics the PAC needed to understand, engage with and expose in order to re-orientate popular thinking in another direction. Time and expediency were of the essence during this phase, hence the prevalence of rhetoric and posturing.

The PAC eventually participated in preparatory talks to plan the meeting of a Convention for a Democratic South Africa on 20 and 21 December 1991. Numerous influences and pressures on the PAC were beginning to yield results, especially following the meeting of the Patriotic Front, led by former liberation movements, i.e. the ANC, PAC and the Azanian People’s Organisation (AZAPO) in October 1991. The eight-hour long preparatory meeting of CODESA included representatives from 20 political parties, government and homeland leaders. On the advice of Zach De Beer, leader of the Democratic Party, two judges were requested to chair the meeting. They were Justice P.J. Schabert and Justice Ismail Mohammed. The decision, at the preparatory meeting was that CODESA would discuss a free political climate, general constitutional principles, a transitional authority, the TVBC states (i.e. the future of Transkei, Venda, Bophutatswana, and Ciskei homelands), the road to international involvement (following years of international isolation) and timeframes for the implementation of CODESA decisions.⁴⁸ Even at the preparatory meeting the PAC contribution often came across as rhetorical and unconstructive. The PAC demanded “a neutral venue and a neutral chairman” for the negotiations, which was opposed by the other parties. As a compromise, to accommodate PAC concerns, the meeting agreed that occasional meetings of CODESA could take

⁴⁷ Weekly Mail, August 1990.

⁴⁸ Daily Dispatch, 30 November, 1991, Archives of the Daily Dispatch, East London.

place at venues outside the country. Most importantly, it was agreed at the meeting that a mechanism should be established to grant indemnity to exiled PAC members to allow them to return to South Africa for CODESA sessions. The meeting agreed to involve the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity, the Commonwealth, the European Community, the Non-Aligned Movement and heads of diplomatic missions as observers to CODESA proceedings. Towards the end of the session the PAC staged a “walk-out”, an incident which invited scathing attacks on the organisation. These came mainly from the ANC’s Secretary General, Cyril Ramaphosa. He told the media briefing that the Minister of Justice in the apartheid government, Kobie Coetzee, had removed the veil over the PAC’s secret meetings with the South African government. On this basis Ramaphosa labelled the behaviour of the PAC as “dishonest, destructive and manipulative”.⁴⁹ The PAC did not deny the secret talks with government. It does not matter how lightly the PAC regarded the utterances by Cyril Ramaphosa. The fact of the matter is that they contributed to a tarnished public image of the PAC and its integrity in the eyes of many South African voters.

At the 3rd Annual Congress of the PAC in April 1992, Clarence Makwethu, the President of the PAC, indicated that the organisation was not opposed to negotiations but demanded that they should occur “at a neutral venue and under a neutral chairman”.⁵⁰ The PAC delegation and the South African government eventually met outside CODESA, at a “neutral venue”, Abuja, Nigeria. Following the Abuja meeting, the PAC appeared to have dropped its insistence to only negotiate the transfer of political power and raised prospects of a restructured negotiations forum, other than CODESA. During the months of July to August 1992, reports abounded of the PAC’s shift “from the bullet to the ballot”. The shift did not herald the PAC’s suspension of the armed struggle, but rather its decision to join negotiations. Dikgang Moseneke, PAC Deputy President, struggled to justify and explain the situation when the PAC rejoined the negotiations in June 1993. He argued that they did not think CODESA, “the vehicle that had been created for brokering an agreement was suited for the job. Our staying outside gave us the obvious benefit of not having to deal with any flak that came out of the faltering of negotiations. It also allowed us to reflect much, much more on the process and what we wanted out of it. In fact, it just helped the PAC to grow and gave us the time to build up structures”.⁵¹ Even though there was no conclusive empirical test of how much support the PAC enjoyed at that point, Moseneke argued, “the PAC has grown phenomenally. We have restructured

⁴⁹ Daily Dispatch, 2 December 1991.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Daily Dispatch, 31 August, 1992, Archives of the Daily Dispatch, East London.

the organisation right from head office to the ground level. We are trying to deal with the perennial criticism that we are weak on the ground – we don't accept that, but we are taking the criticism seriously".⁵²

The PAC and the armed struggle during transitional negotiations

Whilst negotiations between government and the ANC had stalled towards the end of 1990 following security force sponsored violence in the townships, the PAC, through its military wing, APLA, increased military attacks on "soft" and "hard" targets within the country. Between February 1991 and December 1992 there were around 48 incidents of APLA attacks reported and recorded by the police in South Africa⁵³. The Daily Dispatch indicated that between February 1991 and October 1993, the PAC, through its military wing, APLA, was responsible for 54 "terror" attacks in the country⁵⁴. The Goldstone Commission of Enquiry was established by the government to investigate the location and activities of APLA and the focus was on the alleged APLA camps in the Transkei. The Transkei was under military rule led by General Bantu Holomisa, now leader of a South African political party called the United Democratic Movement. The preliminary findings of the Goldstone Commission of Enquiry into APLA activities confirmed the presence and activities of APLA in the Transkei, which was rejected by General Holomisa. Instead he set up his own commission into APLA activities which included investigation into cross-border raids into the Transkei by Afrikaner right-wing movements such as the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB).⁵⁵ The apartheid government in retaliation to the "threat" of PAC military bases and attacks, raided what it called APLA bases in Umtata, which resulted in the murder of five teenagers on 7 October 1992. The alleged base was a house in a suburb called Northcrest in Umtata, in the former Transkei. The youths were sleeping and were unarmed. They were not members of the PAC, except for the parents of the twin brothers, whose names were Sadat and Samora Mpendulo (both 16 years of age). The other three were friends of the twins who had come to sleep over at the house. Their names were Thando Mthembu (19 years old), Sandiso Yose (12 years old) and Mzwandile Mfeya (12 years old). At a press conference in Umtata two members of the PAC National Executive committee, Dr Peter Mayende and Mahlubi Mbandazayo confirmed that the house in which

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Memorandum submitted by the South African Police to the Commission of Enquiry Regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation – Location of APLA Camps, Arms, Ammunition, Personnel and Operational Activities, Port Elizabeth, 4 January, 1993.

⁵⁴ Daily Dispatch, 16 October 1993, Archives of the Daily Dispatch, East London.

⁵⁵ Daily Dispatch, 4 January, 1993, Archives of the Daily Dispatch, East London.

the youths were killed was never used by APLA and that there were no arms or APLA documents in it.⁵⁶

The incident led to a temporary display of unity among liberation movements. They were all outraged by the brutality of De Klerk's security forces and were unanimous in their condemnation of the brutal murders. This further reinforced the PAC's reluctance to enter a unilateral ceasefire, and it insisted, instead, on a mutual cessation of hostilities. The PAC's position on the continuation of the armed struggle, demonstrated by increased APLA attacks during this period, did not count much in its favour. Criticism from the religious fraternity, especially Christian churches and organisations, which are influential community structures, abounded. The Presbyterian Church of South Africa called on the PAC and APLA to abandon violence and re-enter negotiations. PAC violent activities in Kingwilliams Town and Queenstown (both in the Eastern Cape) evoked condemning responses from clerics. Church leaders, among them Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the South African Council of Churches, indicated concern about the activities of APLA and urged for a meeting with the PAC and APLA. They cautioned against possible retaliatory actions by white right wing extremists groups, which could hurt the very African people the PAC sought to liberate.

The PAC vacillated. It was in and out of the negotiations process returning to the negotiating table in June 1993. After leaving towards the end of the year they finally returned early in 1994, just before the elections. Among the issues of great concern and debate at the negotiations was the PAC's refusal to suspend the armed struggle. Jackie Seroke defended the PAC's position on the suspension of the armed struggle. He argued that the PAC was willing to accept the declaration on cessation or suspension of hostilities, in principle, but the implementation would need to be discussed. The militant rhetoric of the PAC was being nourished, not by local mass struggles, but by the PAC group that was still in exile. The leader of APLA, Sabelo Phama, the PAC's Secretary for Defence, was instrumental in this. Phama announced in January 1993 that he had toured South Africa and had been in Soweto, Cape Town, and had met with APLA members in Ntaba kaNdoda, in the former Ciskei and had visited the Transkei. He indicated that APLA would intensify attacks on "soft and hard targets". He named 1993 "the year of the Storm" and 1994, "the year of the Great Offensive".⁵⁷

The role of the Zimbabwe government in facilitating the negotiations for the cessation of hostilities between APLA and the South African government, proved useful during this period. The intervention of Zimbabwe led to the final cessation of hostilities between

⁵⁶ Daily Dispatch, 9 October, 1993, Archives of the Daily Dispatch, East London.

⁵⁷ Daily Dispatch, 15 January 1993, Archives of the Daily Dispatch, East London.

APLA and the South African government. On 2 November 1993, Movani Mohachi, Zimbabwean Minister of Defence, facilitated the first talks between APLA and representatives of the South African government in Harare. The final meeting was held in South Africa on 6 November 1993. The PAC and government formally agreed on “a moratorium on violence”.⁵⁸ In June 1994 the integration of APLA into the new South African National Defence Force (SANDF), many of whose members were already back in South Africa following the 1994 elections and the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as President, was planned at a political level. Following successful negotiations on the integration of liberation movement armies into the new SANDF, APLA held its last parade on 31 July 1994. This coincided with the PAC announcement of its transformation into a political party.⁵⁹

During the July 1993 period of negotiations, one important intervention made by the PAC during the debate in the Negotiating Council at the World Trade Centre, was around the modalities of setting up the Transitional Executive Council (TEC). This position was articulated by Dr Peter Gilingwe Mayende, then PAC Secretary for Land Affairs and Technical Advisor to the PAC negotiating team. The PAC argued that the excitement generated by the announcement of the April 27 1994 election date and the TEC meant that little critical analysis had gone into the decision. The proposals on the TEC were contained in a document presented to the delegates of the Multi-Party Negotiating Council by one of the Technical Committees. The document asserted that “the Transitional Executive Council shall be constituted with executive powers to facilitate, in conjunction with existing legislative and executive structures, the transition to a democratic order in South Africa. Appointment to the Transitional Executive Council shall be made by the State President by proclamation in the *Government Gazette*. The conditions of service, remuneration, allowances and other benefits of members of the TEC shall be determined by the State President in consultation with the Multi-Party process”.⁶⁰

The document indicated that the TEC shall be composed of each of the governments, administrations and organisations which constitute the multi-party negotiating process. Mayende cautioned, during the multi-party talks, that the composition, role and powers of the TEC in the transition to democracy were matters of concern. The composition of the TEC was such that the National Party (NP) and the South African government, would have “two ostensibly separate delegations just as the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the KwaZulu government”.⁶¹ Mayende argued that of the 26 parties participating in the negotiations, at least 10 of them were, in one way or the other, allied to the Na-

⁵⁸ Daily Dispatch, 6 November 1993, Archives of the Daily Dispatch, East London.

⁵⁹ Daily Dispatch, 8 July 1994, Archives of the Daily Dispatch, East London.

⁶⁰ Daily Dispatch 20 July 1993, Archives of the Daily Dispatch, East London.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

tional Party government. “When adding the four parties belonging to COSAG Group which were represented at the talks, the overwhelming majority in the TEC” would have consisted of organisations not belonging or allied to liberation movements.⁶² Mayende explained that “quite obviously the composition of the body will favour the government and Afrikaner right wing”.⁶³ The TEC was going to operate while the apartheid government was still in power and the fact that the TEC would report directly to the apartheid government was problematic. The PAC invoked the formation of a Transitional Authority (TA) as an alternative. The TA would be vested with full executive powers and charged with carrying out the day-to-day administration of the country while the Constituent Assembly was in session. “The critical precondition for the establishment of the TA is the dissolution of the present government and parliament and the transfer of executive and legislative powers to the TA. The TA would play a role in supervising the subsequent elections, control the security forces, state media and defined areas of budget and finance as well as secure international participation”.⁶⁴ Mayende further argued that the difference between the TA and the TEC was that the former, through enabling legislation, would have full legislative and executive powers in respect of specific issues under its jurisdiction, i.e. it would be a fully-fledged authority. The TA would also have a functional relationship with the Constituent Assembly, the latter serving as some kind of transitional parliament.

The extent to which these proposals were considered during negotiations is not clear. The PAC proposal, as one informant explained, “gave us food for thought, despite the fact that political alliances at that time were already firm and the PAC came to join us late in the process”.⁶⁵ This shows that there were occasions when the PAC contributions on substantive issues of strategy and policy during the negotiations process, added value to the discussions.

A careful examination of the PAC’s internal documents, mostly produced during the negotiated transition to democracy, illustrate the organisation’s vision of the future South Africa. This is hardly examined by many researchers thus confirming, even though inadvertently, the portrayal offered by Barry Streek, that the PAC was just a “haven of disillusioned radicals”.⁶⁶ This analysis is not entirely correct as shown by the kind of policy proposals developed within the PAC.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Daily Dispatch 20 July 1993.

⁶⁴ Daily Dispatch, 20 July 1990.

⁶⁵ Interview – ANC stalwart, Johannesburg, 19 December 2008.

⁶⁶ B. Streek: PAC Unbanned, Supplement, Cape Town, September 1990, p.2.

Aspects of the PAC's vision of a non-racial democratic society

The Africanist, a bulletin of the PAC, outlined in 1993 the PAC's vision of the new order in South Africa. It is important to examine the PAC's vision because aspects it informed the policy direction of the ANC led government, particularly in the areas of agriculture and land reform.

The PAC indicated, in broad terms, its alternative economic policy proposals in 1992 and published amended versions in 1993. In 1992 the organisation indicated that it envisaged an economy "which would serve the interests of the 'indigenous African people'. The PAC believed that the state had a central role to play in redistributing wealth to this sector of the population".⁶⁷ *The Africanist*, an internal PAC publication in 1993, addressed the key issues and outline the PAC's vision of a new democratic order in South Africa, covering the land question, economic development and growth, the role of labour, nationalisation and foreign investment.

The land question

Ideologically, this was one area of crucial emphasis in the PAC before and during the negotiations period. The remarks by PAC Chairman, John Nyathi Pokela, at the Plenary Session of the PAC held in Bagamoyo, Tanzania in July 1983, capture succinctly the PAC's emphasis and prioritisation of the land question, a matter not yet resolved 15 years into the democratic dispensation. Pokela argued that "the struggle against the oppressor has always been fought over the question of land and the super-exploitation of our people – the Africans. It is important for us as a national movement to forge organic permanent links with the Trade Union Movement. Remember, land wars are labour wars".⁶⁸

The PAC policy document on the land dispensation in a post-apartheid South Africa is the most elaborate and pragmatic document among all policy documents produced by the PAC during this period. It indicates three options of addressing the land dispossession of African people. The first option was the expropriation of land for redistribution to the landless without compensation for those dispossessed. The second option was premised on the notion of "de-commodification and redistribution and allocation of land use. Under this option, land shall cease to be a commodity to be bought and sold at the

⁶⁷ C. Cooper et al: *Race Relations Survey*, 1992/93, South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg, 1993, p. 568; S. Shabalala: *Economic Emancipation: A Pan Africanist Congress View*, IDASA occasional paper no.34, 1990 .

⁶⁸ PAC: *Opening Remarks at the Plenary Session held in Bagamoyo from 21–27 July 1983*, delivered by Cde John Nyathi Pokela, Chairman of the PAC of Azania, Archives of the Solidarity Group (Zurich, 1971–1988), p. 2.

market”.⁶⁹ Land would be redistributed for use by all Africans, based on the PAC’s definition of Africans “which is not based on colour, creed or place of origin but on loyalty, self recognition and identification and recognition by others”.⁷⁰ The size of units of land allocated would be determined by its intended use, the degree of landlessness among citizens, the requirement to achieve economic efficiency and effectiveness in the use of land, the need for environmental protection or reversal of environmental degradation and the needs of the future generation. According to this option, justifiable compensation for those whose land will be taken away will be based on individual merits and will be guided by size of land owned, current use, the quality of the land and demonstrable capital investment. “The payment towards compensatable land will be in the form of interest bearing government bonds”.⁷¹ The policy indicated that “every citizen of Azania shall have access to land on a lease entitlement and the right to pass this lease to their children, but not sell the land itself”.⁷²

The third option invoked the possibility of a land tax. This would mean using the tax structure to “incentivise” landowners to sell the land to the State and “disincentivise”⁷³ keeping land beyond a certain size. The PAC policy was justified around one major principle, i.e. whether the policy will bring about a situation whereby sufficient land will be made available to as many landless people as possible within the shortest period of time.

These issues are not elaborated in the *Africanist*, but in the original policy document prepared by Gilingwe Peter Mayende, “*The Land and Agriculture Policy of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania*”, published by the PAC’s Department of Land and Agricultural Affairs, in October 1993.⁷⁴ The policy document covers such critical issues as the “land reform strategy” which conceives of land reform “as a process led by the people through their organised (community-based) structures, with backing by the state”.⁷⁵ This is contrary to the post 1994 land reform dispensation, which is largely state led rather than people led. Part of the critique of land reform in South Africa today is that it is failing because land reform beneficiaries are on the margins of the game and the state is doing it on their behalf. This came out of the 2005 Land Summit in which community-based organisations and non-governmental organisations voiced strong criticisms of state led land reform in South Africa. They argued for greater participation by land reform ben-

⁶⁹ PAC: *The Africanist*, A Bulletin of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, Vol. No. 3, 1993, p. 6

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ PAC: *The Africanist*, p. 6.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ PAC: *The Land and Agriculture Policy of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania*, Department of Land and Agricultural Affairs, PAC Headquarters, Johannesburg, October 1993.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

eficiaries and a more decisive leadership role of the state. This indirectly invokes aspects of the PAC's vision of the post 1994 land dispensation in South Africa, published in its policy document in 1993. The PAC policy opposed, from the outset, market based land reform. It argued that "land reform cannot, therefore, succeed through a strategy stressing 'redistribution' through the sway of 'market forces'. This is essentially a pro *status quo* position".⁷⁶ The issue came up during the 2005 Land Summit. Community organisations and non-governmental organisations called for a review of the willing- buyer, willing-seller principle and indicated that market based land reform was not likely to deliver at the pace required to meet the equity imperatives of transformation in South Africa, hence the need for a robust state role to back up communities.⁷⁷

The new Minister of Rural Development and Land Affairs, Gugile Nkwinti, has also called for the consideration of a review of the willing-buyer, willing-seller principle which forms the basis of market driven land reform in South Africa.⁷⁸ Again, it seems after 15 years of attainment of independence, issues raised by the PAC in its land and agriculture policy document are surfacing and requiring discussion. Instead of the free-market approach, the PAC policy invoked two notions – one of expropriation, where the general principle will be that of expropriation without compensation but in isolated cases compensation will be worked out and limited to "developments on the land (eg. physical structures, dams, fencing, silos, trees planted, etc). No compensation will be paid for the land itself. The second notion was that of the land-ceiling, that is the "imposition through legislation, of a general limit to the size of landholding which any individual can utilise".⁷⁹

The PAC's policy proposal on issues to consider in order to inform decisions on the payment of compensation to expropriated landowners seems to have partially informed section 25(3) (b) and (d) of the final Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Section 25(3) of the Constitution indicates that "the amount of compensation and the time and manner of payment must be just and equitable, reflecting an equitable balance between public interest and the interests of those affected, having regard to all relevant circumstances, including: (a) the current use of property, (b) the history of acquisition and use of property, (c) the market value of property, (d) the extent of direct state investment and subsidy in the acquisition and beneficial capital improvement of property, (e) the purpose of expropriation".⁸⁰

⁷⁶ PAC: The Land and Agricultural Policy of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, Department of Land and Agricultural Affairs, PAC Headquarters, Johannesburg, October 1993, p. 6.

⁷⁷ Department of Land Affairs – Report of the National Land Summit, 27–30 July 2005.

⁷⁸ Daily Dispatch, July 2009.

⁷⁹ PAC: The Land and Agricultural Policy of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, Department of Land and Agricultural Affairs, PAC Headquarters, Johannesburg, October 1993, p. 6.

⁸⁰ Republic of South Africa: Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 101, 1996

In 2006 the Department of Land Affairs commissioned a study to examine the possibility of a land tax in South Africa.⁸¹ Importantly, the PAC policy document made specific proposals on the “institutional framework for land reform”.⁸² Among the proposals were the formation of the National Department for Land and Agrarian Reform whose sole mandate will be to “expedite the modalities of expropriation and redistribution of the land”, the National Land Bank “to facilitate the organisation and implementation of financial packages for the agricultural sector in general”, the Land Claims Commission “to address through an administrative process anchored upon specific legislation providing for the acquisition and redistribution to its original owners all the land confiscated through apartheid policy of forced removals and Land Claims Committees constituted by grassroots structures “to ensure that the process of implementation of land reform is not top-down”.⁸³ The PAC policy document also covers the role of local government and civic associations in “ensuring fair play in the allocation and utilization of land”.⁸⁴ After a decade of failures in the implementation of land reform policy, it appears that the PAC’s view, which was sidelined and partially incorporated with modifications, now resonates with the demands of the landless and poor majority as were expressed during the national land summit in June 2005.⁸⁵ The national land summit resolved, among other resolutions, that the “willing buyer, willing seller principles and market driven approaches to land and agrarian reform” be reviewed, so that land reform is not based solely on this principle.⁸⁶ It resolved that a framework for the support of beneficiaries of land reform be developed and proactive acquisition of land, by the state through purchase and expropriation, where necessary, should occur.⁸⁷ It is interesting to note that the orientation of the resolutions invoke the very same measures proposed in the PAC policy document of October 1993.

Development and economic growth

The PAC policy document maintained that the continued “existence of extreme wealth differentiation between the haves and have-nots, in the country is a war-like situation”.⁸⁸ In its 1993 analysis 80% of the country’s wealth was owned by four big corporations, i.e. the Anglo-American group, the Rembrandt group, SA Mutual and Sanlam. As little as

⁸¹ Department of Land Affairs: A partnership to fast track land reform: A new trajectory towards 2014, 2006–2009 Strategic Plan, Pretoria, March 2006, p. 20.

⁸² PAC: The Land and Agricultural Policy of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, p. 18.

⁸³ *Ibid.* pp.18–20.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Department of Land Affairs - Report of the National Land Summit, 27–30 July 2005.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* p. 9.

⁸⁷ Department of Land Affairs - Report of the National Land Summit, 27–30 July 2005. p. 11–14.

⁸⁸ PAC: The Africanist, p. 6.

5% of the white South African population owns 88% of the wealth of the country and the vast majority of black people own less than 2% of national assets. Up to 40% of the employable community was unemployed and more than 95% of the unemployed were black people. The PAC policy document therefore suggested that a “Marshal Plan” of some kind was needed and this would require, as an absolute necessity, the active involvement of the state. Today’s discussions in the ruling party about a “developmental state” seem to be resurrecting this view.

The policy document proposed “entrepreneurial involvement whereby the state is a producer and distributor of specific offerings to the final consumer”.⁸⁹ It envisaged the sponsoring of enterprises operating outside the control of the state. These included co-operatives and worker-controlled corporations. The PAC recommended “organized counterveiling forces against the dysfunctional effects”⁹⁰ of its operations, which would include the state, independent trade-unions and strong consumer movements. The same “counterveiling forces” were required against the dysfunctional operations of the state. The PAC merely outlined a broad vision or direction of future economic policy. More detail would have been needed if the PAC were to win power after the 1994 elections. The problem with the PAC policy documents were that these were too inward looking; they were not moulded, as was the case with the ANC’s policy documents, by a cross-section of role-players in South Africa and the international community.

Nationalisation

The PAC’s view on this matter showed little interest with the idea of nationalising private sector corporations. The organisation argued that “it is the economic behaviour of economic institutions that is more important than their mere ownership by the state”.⁹¹ The PAC explained that nationalisation does not necessarily lead to “a socialised economic system”.⁹² It may lead to a situation where wealth and associated resources are redistributed from a small dominant elite or class or national group to another small elite or class from the historically disadvantaged group. From the PAC point of view, a state which can have an effective role in a redistributive economy is one which epitomises the collective will of popular forces, needs, interests and priorities rather than a collective of bureaucrats. Thus a state’s redistributive methods are more important than mere nationalisation.

It is difficult to track the extent of influence the PAC’s position on nationalisation

⁸⁹ PAC: The Africanist, p. 7.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ PAC: The Africanist, p. 7.

⁹² *Ibid.* p. 7.

influenced the ANC position. The ANC started from a pro-nationalisation stance, but by 1994 had abandoned nationalisation as a policy option. Given the ANC's advantage drawing on a broad alliance of class forces and interests, it was able to refine its position on economic policy until its blueprint, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was unveiled and formed the basis of its campaign in the April 1994 elections. By 1996 the RDP was downplayed and a new macro-economic policy called Growth, Equity and Redistribution (GEAR) was announced and implemented.

Foreign investment

The PAC advanced a policy position which argued that national interests should guide foreign investments in strategic and critical areas of the national economy. The PAC, if it were to govern, would "solicit and invite financial and material assistance from foreign governments and non-governmental bodies for strategic purposes".⁹³ The PAC indicated that it would minimize foreign debt traps that have become so destructive for developing countries, including South Africa.

The kinds of investment areas the PAC identified for foreign capital included technology transfer oriented investment, joint venture capital with historically disadvantaged groups and joint ventures with private existing firms or the state enterprises. To attract and retain foreign investment, the PAC would promote stable labour relations and honour and guarantee agreements. It outlined the importance of developing human resources and the extension of the domestic market in order to create higher returns to investors.

In broad terms, the PAC's vision of the new democratic order showed a degree of pragmatism, but in orientation it was congruent with the recent economic policy views of the ANC. Like the ANC's economic policy views, post the December 2007 Polokwane National Conference, the PAC held the view that capitalism and the market should not necessarily be done away with. But an "activist" state should direct the functioning of the free market through redistributive policies in order to meet the equity imperatives of a liberated South Africa. Both the PAC's vision pre-1994 and the ANC's policy pronouncements after 2007 remain rhetorical as they lack practical implementation details. Both approaches seem to underestimate the strategic Western agenda in the "Third World". The leading Western powers (the United States of America, Britain, Germany and France) have well entrenched economic interests and agendas in South Africa, based on the accumulation of human and material resources, as well as the use of military and financial institutions to influence the direction of change in South Africa. The ruling ANC invited

⁹³ PAC: *The Africanist*, pp. 7–12.

these very powerful forces when it internationalised its ‘united front’⁹⁴ could not, by mere stroke of policy re-direction, extricate their “foundational” and powerful role in influencing the direction and character of post-apartheid South Africa.

The PAC’s vision of a new dispensation in South Africa did not enjoy support from the electorate hence its dismal record in the 1994 elections. The PAC won 1.25% of the total votes which amounted to 243,478 people who voted winning 5 seats in the National Assembly.⁹⁵ The vision of the PAC was somewhat unrealistic given the role of powerful forces that have a big stake in the future of South Africa. But the Africanist orientation of the PAC was appropriated in the policies of the new democratic government, especially during the period of former President Thabo Mbeki.⁹⁶

The stories of the ANC and the PAC and the strategic choices they made, especially during the period of transitional negotiations, offer a perspective on how South Africa ended up with a constrained national liberation solution after 1994. By implication, it is plausible to argue that the liberation of South Africa is a “dream deferred”,⁹⁷ a dream which will, perhaps, be realised in the “next liberation struggle”.⁹⁸ The inequities and failures of the present negotiated liberation put on the agenda of South Africa, prospects for the “next liberation struggle”. The entrenched racial economic injustices, deepening socio-economic inequalities and decades of unfulfilled promises may eventually turn ordinary masses of the poor into revolutionaries, forging a new consciousness and a new “political spirituality”.⁹⁹ It is the political spiritual force which will emerge from suffering during the age of freedom, which will turn the poorest of the poor into agents of revolutionary change.

In summary, this chapter has covered the most difficult period in the history of the South Africa, the period 1990–1994. Difficult because all liberation movements had to maintain a delicate balance between revolutionary orientation and pragmatic strategies of dealing with a negotiated solution to national liberation. This had to be accomplished against certain injunctions by powerful interest groups, locally and internationally. Inside South Africa a situation of unstable equilibrium in the balance of forces had arisen. Lib-

⁹⁴ D.T. Mckinley: *The ANC and the Liberation Struggle*, p.58.

⁹⁵ Archives of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) – SABC Research Department, Johannesburg, South Africa.

⁹⁶ T. Hoeane: *The state of the Pan Africanist Congress in a democratic South Africa*, in (eds) P. Kagwanja and K.Kondlo: *State of the Nation – South Africa 2008*, HSRC Press 2009, p. 58–83.

⁹⁷ M. Gevisser: *Thabo Mbeki – The Dream Deferred*, Jonathan Ball, Cape Town, 2007.

⁹⁸ J.S Saul: *The Next Liberation Struggle: Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*; Mirlin Press, London, 2005.

⁹⁹ P. Rabinow (ed): *Michel Foucault – Ethics – Essential Works of Foucault 1954–1984*, Penguin Books, USA, 1994, p.xxxiii.

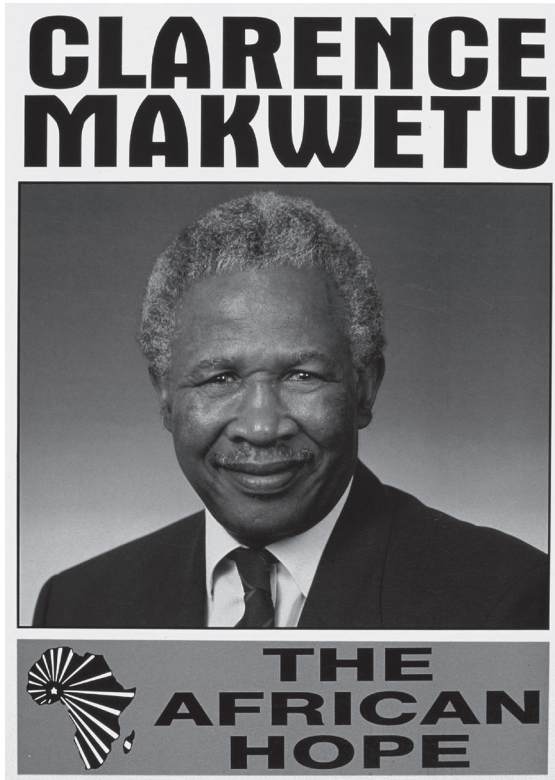


Fig. 14 PAC poster for the 1994 elections in South Africa.

eration movements could not overthrow the apartheid government and the latter could not put an end to the liberation struggle, even though it could still contain the liberation forces for quite some time.

The PAC was faced with the difficult choice, to continue with its pre-planned revolutionary agenda, which would mean ignoring political developments inside the country, or participating in negotiations whilst simultaneously pursuing its pre-planned agenda of the armed struggle. The PAC shifted from one position to the other. Initially it rejected the whole negotiations arrangement and wanted to continue with its liberation struggle plans. This was not sustainable given the support negotiations enjoyed in Africa and all over the world. The PAC shifted after 1990 to a second position. It intensified the armed struggle but was willing to join negotiations. This was not acceptable to many roleplayers in the negotiations process. Eventually in 1993 the PAC agreed with the government on a mutual cessation of hostilities and end to violence and eventually joined the negotiations, “full-time”, early in 1994, just before the elections.

What appears to have happened is that the PAC had “a crisis of choice”. The timing of its choices was inappropriate and the organisation failed to consistently pursue a

single choice. It waived and lost the confidence of the electorate in South Africa. This was partly a result of historical weaknesses emanating from years of internal conflict and disunity and partly a result of its failure to establish itself in the consciousness of the people of South Africa. Besides that “new winds of change”, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, were so strong even African states saw possibilities for the oppressed South Africans in a negotiated deal and the PAC found itself dragged, unwillingly, to a platform which was not of its own design.

Conclusions

The exile history of the Pan Africanist Congress (1960–1990) is a complex subject. This book cannot claim to have covered in an exhaustive way, all the aspects involved. In addition to the wide scope of the topic and the complexity of issues involved, other difficulties emanated from the sources used. These are explained in Chapter one. Published works consulted all suffer the limitations of contemporary chronicles. They bear the marks of self-justification, are partial in their sympathies, or deal with only a portion of the overall picture. Some of the articles referred to are, by definition, journalism and obviously fall short on the depth of historical analysis. There is a mass of archival material that has been consulted throughout. Occasionally, the material tends to be imprecise on dates and points of detail, apart from its uneven spread across the exile period. Therefore in as many instances as possible, a cross-corroboration exercise against oral evidence has been made.

The gathering of oral evidence has not been without problems. As indicated in Chapter one, oral evidence depends on memories to derive its narrative of the past, these, however, fade and are unreliable as a source of historical evidence. As Andre' Brink commented, "memory, which is always and per definition selective, comprises not only acts of recovery but also processes of suppression".¹ To minimize the problem, oral information has been corroborated against and supplemented with written records. The silences, which both sources display, particularly on the sequence of events, could only be filled through imaginings of history and understanding of context. In this instance I partially concurs with Robin Cobb who argued that, "the task of the historian, especially if he is a specialist of social history, is much akin to that of a novelist. There must be an element of guesswork. It is like attempting to sound the inaudible and to penetrate the secrets of the human heart".²

The study represents the first attempt to examine and place in a single publication the many aspects of the PAC's history, from 1959–1994. It has gaps, which hopefully will justify further research in this subject. Before these are identified, it will be useful to reflect on the questions, which formed the basis for the study and assess the degree to which they have been resolved.

¹ A. Brink: *Stories of History: reimagining the past in post-Apartheid narrative*, in S. Nuttal and C. Coetzee (eds.): *Negotiating the Past – The Making of Memory in South Africa*, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 2002, p. 36.

² R. Cobb: *Paris and its Provinces*, Oxford University Press, London, 1975, p. 5.

The study has sought to examine the following issues:

1. The nature of sources available to examine the history and politics of the PAC, especailly during the exile years. The internal and external limitations of the documentary sources as well as oral information are covered in the first sections of the book.
2. How did the PAC re-establish itself as an organisation in exile? How does one characterise the formative years in exile in terms of the nature of intra-PAC relations, the forces or factors that determined and conditioned these relationships?
3. Intra-PAC relations during the various leadership phases up to 1990 when the organisation was unbanned. Factors, which determined and conditioned these relationships during the whole period under review.
4. Comparative analysis of intra-PAC relations with other liberation movements in Southern Africa.
5. The nature of living conditions in the PAC camps.
6. The military strategy of the PAC, how it evolved and the nature of the relationship between the army and political leadership in the PAC.
7. Developing a theoretical framework about the exile phenomenon by examining how the exile experience impacted on the functioning of liberation movements.
8. The way in which the PAC responded to unbanning and the negotiations as well as aspects of its vision of a post-apartheid South Africa.

In relation to the first question, this research has demonstrated that the formation of the PAC as a liberation movement was a long drawn out process. The first stage, referred to in the research was the formative period between the years 1960 to 1962 and 1962 to 1964. The pre-1962 period was characterised by a loose inchoate organisation. The majority of PAC leaders who constituted the first Executive Committee, were either in detention inside South African prisons or were serving jail sentences ranging from one to three years due to their role in the anti-pass demonstrations of 21 March 1960. The few PAC Executive Committee members who managed to escape were scattered in various parts of Africa, Europe and America. In other words the PAC had no recognisable or active political existence outside South Africa until August 1962 when the first PAC Executive Committee was formalised under the leadership of P.K. Leballo. From the very outset, the establishment of the PAC as a functioning structure was characterised by disunity. This stemmed from the lack of consultation and the tendency to treat the organisation

as though it were a personal possession, especially by Leballo, the acting President of the PAC. Leballo took decisions, which ultimately had an impact on the entire organisation, either alone or with a few handpicked members of the National Executive. This resulted in the formation of cliques at leadership level. Of course the cliques were not as well-defined as one would anticipate. PAC leaders changed allegiances and cliques purely on the basis of expediency and opportunity. Ellias Ntloedibe was considered, for instance, part of the dominant Leballo faction, but in 1979, just before Leballo was deposed on 1 May, he had already changed tune and was identifying with the Vusumzi Make faction, which was to take power after Leballo. The ability to read the balance of power and fall on the 'correct' side of its tilt seems to have been an important attribute for survival in the PAC during the period of exile. People belonged to the same faction for as long as it was still viable to do so. Given this scenario, intra-PAC relations during the formative years were turbulent, unpredictable and underpinned by opportunities for survival, both materially and politically. These relations were not conditioned by the will of those on whose behalf the struggle was fought, let alone the rank and file membership of the PAC.

Relations within the PAC took a further down turn following the disclosure of the plans of *Pogo*, for which Leballo was blamed. This affected his leadership approach in the sense that the manner in which he was "going-it alone" in the management of PAC affairs, from finance to diplomatic relations and the military, conveys the impression of a very insecure leader. By the time the PAC leadership moved the headquarters to Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania, Leballo was the sole leader of the National Executive Committee. His leadership style set a trend for the kind of leadership culture, which dominated the PAC after he was deposed.

Factors which determined and conditioned intra-PAC relations during the formative years have been shown to be largely internal and to a limited extent, external. They were largely internal in the sense that the levers of organisational power were still being defined, given the gap created by the absence of Sobukhwe. The organisation was trying to find a single focus or issue around which to rally and there was competition to define, shape and give content to the point of singularity of organisation. Hence Leballo's strong assertion of his role as acting President of the PAC. He defined the terrain of the PAC's internal exile politics ideologically, diplomatically and in terms of the culture of leadership, despite the many dissenting voices. In these three areas, the leaders who succeeded him were invariably constrained and could not effect meaningful changes.

The mapping of the terrain of the PAC's internal politics in exile links directly with the second question about intra-PAC relations during the various leadership periods. The styles of leadership in the PAC differed depending on who was the chairman of the or-

organisation during a particular period. Even though the styles differed, there were trends of continuity. The dominant trends of continuity were manifested in the self-perpetuation of a highly centralised political authority. This resulted in pervasive disunity during all the leadership periods identified in the study. The membership was not consulted in the election of its leaders. Rank and file PAC members were excluded from critical political decisions about the future of the organisation. Added to this were material disparities between the leaders and the led. The lifestyles and living conditions of the leaders were radically different from those of the membership, yet the organisation consistently pleaded poverty. There were no organisational standards understood by the membership of the PAC regarding the management of funds and other resources donated to the organisation by the international community. Perceptions of favouritism, sometimes along tribal lines, uninvestigated allegations about internal enemies, all widened the internal rifts between the leadership and the general membership of the organisation. The leadership of the PAC, even during Nyathi Pokela's term of office, was not transparent in a manner that restored membership confidence in the leadership. The PAC consultative conference which was proposed in order to interrogate issues which caused internal conflict, was postponed by Pokela's leadership. By the time it was held in 1990 (under Mlambo's leadership), political circumstances had changed to such an extent that its significance was undermined. In short, during the four leadership periods identified, critical factors which influenced and conditioned intra-PAC relations, were centred around the management of resources, access to positions of power and also ideological lines. The problems relating to these issues appeared almost consistently throughout the exile period. These were basically internal matters which attested to poor organisational strategy, systems and procedures as well as policies.

External factors were significant in shaping intra-PAC relations during all the leadership periods. The extent of their contribution is made less overt or even thwarted to a certain extent, by the perpetual self-consumption by internal disunity which characterized the PAC exile existence. The external factors related, first and foremost to the very nature of the exile environment. It offered both opportunities and threats, as discussed in Chapter 2. The material benefits the exile environment provided to the PAC were largely limited to the leadership and the few PAC members who happened to be within the corporate circles of the revolutionary aristocracy, either through kinship relations or who were descendants of well-known families in the history of the struggle for liberation in South Africa. As one informant argued trying to convince the researcher "you would have lived a good life in exile because Comrade Gerald Kondlo, the first Commander of the APLA forces was your uncle. You would have received good scholarships and never be

without money”.³ Material benefits of the exile environment did not reach down to the ordinary PAC members who had no political connections, well-known surnames in the liberation struggle or even belong to the respected or dominant ethnic group. In other words, material resources donated to the PAC engendered corruption and favouritism within the organisation.

External factors in the form of mounting military attacks from the South African government in the 1980’s, contributed to the development of a commandist authority and stiff disciplinary code within the PAC. This development was orchestrated by the belief that the exile environment had become increasingly militarised and dangerous. The unguided application of the disciplinary code and authority resulted in situations, which approximated to an abuse of human rights of PAC members in the camps in Tanzania. This added to dissatisfaction with conditions of life inside the camps.

External support for the leadership of the PAC, especially from the Tanzanian government and the Organisation of African Unity meant that there was no neutral forum where the PAC leadership could be made to give account in times when the general membership was completely dissatisfied. This was demonstrated in Chapter 6A. J.D. Nyaose, for instance, a senior member of the PAC’s Central Committee and president of FOFA-TUSA appealed for intervention from the OAU’s Africa Liberation Committee concerning his expulsion from the PAC. The OAU referred the matter back to P.K. Leballo, the very person who sanctioned Nyaose’s expulsion. Ordinary PAC members who were both unfairly treated and excluded from important decision-making processes had no other forum beyond the PAC’s Central Committee to which they could appeal to in order to get their views heard. This is one of the reasons why Leballo’s Chairmanship lasted for such a long time despite internal dissatisfaction with his style of leadership. External support was used as another form of political control by the leadership of the PAC throughout the exile period. In 1979, Vusumzi Make appealed to the host country’s troops to suppress a rebellion by the APLA cadres loyal to the deposed predecessor, P.K. Leballo. A complex combination of both internal and external factors accounted for the state the PAC found itself in during the long exile period.

A comparative analysis of intra-PAC relations with other liberation movements in Southern Africa is also undertaken. There are similar factors relating to internal divisions and external factors which conditioned or influenced the internal relations. SWAPO of Namibia, ANC of South Africa and ZANU of Zimbabwe experienced similar pitfalls during their exile periods. The details of the periods of crises were discussed in Chapter 4

³ Interview with D.D.D. Mantshontsho, Umtata, 15 February 1995.

and Chapters 6A and 6B. The differences between these organisations and the PAC lay in the manner in which the leadership collectively dealt with internal problems and crises. In these organisations there seem to have been unquestioned acceptance by the majority of the membership of the established leadership and its chosen priorities. In the case of SWAPO, which like the PAC had serious moments of crisis, Sam Nujoma, the President of the organisation had assumed the “informal, honorific sobriquet, ‘the Old Man’ and woe betide any ‘youngster’ who sought to undermine this order of things with any novel notions of accountability or the like”.⁴ This attested to the fact that the leadership structures in these organisations were authoritarian and therefore submitted to internally. Intervention by the host countries was sought by the leadership itself. It never came as a surprising imposition from outside. This was not the situation in the case of the PAC where the leadership was itself divided on the basis of mutual mistrust and political blackmail.

Another question raised was about the nature of the PAC’s military strategy and the relationship between the army and the political leadership. The research has shown that during the formative period (1960–1967) the PAC hardly had a clearly defined strategy. The conceptions of who the enemy was were divergent and contradictory. After 1967, Leballo formalised the military strategy of the organisation, even though it was not clearly understood by the majority of the members. From 1968 to 1978, the time of the expulsion of the APLA High Command led by T.M. Ntantala, there seemed to have been bi-polarity of opinions about strategy. The division was mainly between Ntantala and Leballo. The source of the schism was partly ideological and partly power related. The members of the army tended to see themselves as distinct from the civilian members of the PAC and were loyal to their military leaders and less dependant on the political leadership. Hence Leballo’s attempt to win the support of the younger generation of militants and the 1977 attempt to topple the Military High Command. He wanted to solve the problem of divided loyalties within the PAC. His approach rattled the Tanzanian government and he was eventually deposed in 1979 with the connivance of Tanzanian authorities. Unity between the army and the political leadership remained a problem until the unbanning of the PAC in 1990. The root of the problem was that PAC military leaders, unlike the situation in the ANC, were not prominent political leaders. As a result political leadership could not control military leadership without exerting strains on internal organisational relationships.

Generation gaps within the PAC army itself (e.g. the *Pogo* group (1960s), the post-1976 group and the post-1986 group) and the different military traditions emanating

⁴ C. Leys and J.S. Saul: *The Two Edged Sword*, p. 43.

from the various areas where APLA members received training, was another factor resulting in the lack of unity in military strategic thinking within the PAC. Nor did the PAC establish a system of monitoring military strategy implementation. As a result the military strategy of the PAC was only good on paper but never found its way into concrete application. This too was attributable to the lack of leadership. The leadership of the organisation was embroiled in political squabbles with itself and as a result lost strategic focus. Pokela's attempts to remodel the PAC was concerned more about the restructuring of operations than about long term strategy.

Lastly, the research attempted in Chapter 4 to develop a theoretical framework of exile experience. Even though the framework will require further elaboration, it clearly showed how existing research conceptualised the notion of 'exile' and related experience. It demonstrated that despite the discrete discursive domains which characterised the exile experience of liberation movements, there were common themes which make it possible for the researcher to typify exile experience, albeit not in a comprehensive manner. These included the sets of advantages or opportunities as well as the problems or difficulties the environment provided. The manner in which liberation movements dealt with these issues was constitutive of exile experience. The chapter has also delved into issues about the political economy of Frontline States, BLS states, i.e. Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland and the role of the OAU. The conclusion was that these countries, because of their economic dependency on South Africa, which varied from one country to the other, were not a safe haven for liberation movements. South Africa's forward defence strategy, which entailed cross border raids on countries suspected of harbouring the ANC and PAC guerrillas, complicated the exile environment even further. This had an impact on how the liberation movements operated. A pervasive sense of insecurity influenced leadership styles hence the development of commandist and stiff codes, especially in the military camps. In as much as the liberation movements were a product of their own internal dynamic, they were also a product of the exile environment in which they operated.

Thorough analysis of sources point to the fact that the organisation was lacking in strategy, organisation, 'praxis' and leadership. This rendered it vulnerable to OAU and Tanzanian government interference. These issues are explained below.

There was no entrenched organisation-wide system for consultation when electing the chairman of the PAC. This attests to the absence of succession planning within the organisation. In all the leadership periods identified, the issue of consultation, framed as 'the leadership should derive a mandate from the membership', crops up frequently. The decision to elect a chairman was restricted to a few 'elites' within the Central Committee of the PAC. Yet it was expected that the chairman should be supported by all PAC mem-

bers. This explains why the PAC had persistent internal conflicts and disagreements over the structures, systems and processes to be followed by the organisation.

The attitude of the OAU Liberation Committee and the Tanzanian government's tendency to assume that the leader is always right, was fundamental to the crisis in the PAC. It took the OAU and the Tanzanian government seventeen years to decide that P.K. Leballo was at the centre of the problems the PAC experienced and that he had to go in order to find a solution. The Tanzanian government supported him and blocked all internal PAC efforts to remove him.

Some of the problems within the organisation were minor and could have been solved amicably. These include misunderstandings due to poor communication, gossip, misinformation about the performance of heads of departments and associations among members of the PAC from the same regions in South Africa. These bred negative perceptions and resulted in conflicts, which separated the leaders from the rank and file and divided the Central Committee within itself. The organisation lacked the means through which its members could differ without destroying the wider possibilities for constructive dialogue and communication. For those at the bottom of the hierarchy, there was no organisational mechanism through which they could talk truth to power. With these frustrations, there was the likelihood that frustration would be vented on one another. There were of course serious grounds for dissatisfaction, as demonstrated particularly in Chapter 6, the resolution of which could have threatened positions of power within the organisation.

The PAC did not have a leadership and management model to inform and direct its leadership and management practices. It lacked sound leadership and management practices. Most importantly, the organisation's conceptions of the South African revolution were theoretical and divorced from the reality of the changes that were happening. This is covered in detail in Chapter 9, which outlines the PAC's response to unbanning and transitional negotiations. The notion of praxis and its significance within a liberation movement is introduced. Praxis is about transition from theory to reality in a way that leaves intact their intimate unity.⁵ This is one of the areas where the PAC experienced problems. The organisation could hardly discern the dynamics of the liberation struggle in South Africa beyond the ideological spectacles framed by the particular social and historical conditions of the early 1960s. Hence it can be concluded that one of the problems of the PAC was a problem of praxis. The attitude towards praxis entails a consciousness of practical fact. This was absent in the PAC during the exile period.

The nature of the conflict in the PAC remains debatable because its ramifications

⁵ Adolph Sanchez: *Philosophy of Praxis*, pp. 191–193.

cast the scope of research in an ever-widening mode. The fact that there was not merely one but several levels of strained relationships within the PAC during this period makes the research question rather inchoate and complex. The sheer length of the conflict, in months and years, with huge “*dramatis personae*” constantly appearing and disappearing and with the multiple levels of strained relationships often out of phase with each other, present a canvass of daunting size.⁶ In spite of the periodisation adopted in the research and the sequence portrayed about the way in which the internal relationships manifested themselves, there is still no obvious single focus or climax. The relationships at the level of political leadership and the management of the finances and the relationship between the army and the political leadership are all crucial to the generation of conflict, but cannot be posited as the beginning and the end of it all. There is perhaps another level of finer detail which might have escaped the analysis provided in this research and which future research will be able to uncover. Therefore, one research thesis on this subject can never suffice.

There are research questions emanating from this study or areas which need further research. These include the patterns of migration into exile, which have not been examined in this book. This is an important area to illuminate the reconstitution of the PAC and the conflict which ensued especially during the formative years in exile. As Fikeni argues, “the exile environment and the nature of departure” into exile, “combine to produce the totality of outlook that define an exile”.⁷ Closely linked to the patterns of migration are the trends of re-settlement in exile. The two were very critical in the generation of conflict within the PAC. These issues are discussed in the research (in Chapters 6 and 7) but have not been singled out for detailed analysis. The book mentions three waves of departure into exile, hence the three generations of PAC exiles, the 1960s group, the post-1976 group and the post 1984–1986 group. The patterns of migration or forms of flight into exile and their resettlement outside South Africa, is important in the study of the generation of conflict within the PAC. These factors influenced behaviour in the exile situation and shed light on incidents leading to the departure, social backgrounds, political inclinations, expectations, age and even sex.

What makes the question of patterns of migration and trends of resettlement particularly interesting for further research are the fact that three major conflicts within the PAC seemed to tally with the periods of the waves of migration into exile. During the 1960s the organisation experienced a major internal conflict in 1967 resulting in the summon-

⁶ A. Horne: *A Savage War of Peace; Algeria 1954–1962*, Papermac, London, 1987, p. 13. A similar observation was made by this author in his examination of the FNL during the Algerian liberation struggle.

⁷ S. Fikeni: “*Exile and Return*”, p. 3.

ing of a Unity conference in Moshi, Tanzania. In 1977, after the second wave of departures following the 1976 Soweto uprisings, the PAC had serious internal conflicts, which resulted in the Arusha conference in 1978. Lastly, in 1989 the internal ideological war in the PAC saw the birth of the Sobukhwe Forum. A study of the patterns of migration and trends of resettlement could reveal more on the root causes of the internal conflict in the PAC during the exile period.

The second area not covered in depth by the research relates to the PAC and international relations. This area includes an analysis of the propaganda images of the PAC projected by its leadership internationally, and the impact that it had on the diplomatic profile of the organisation during the exile period. In this research, international support for the PAC and its relations with China, Libya, the OAU, the UN, Frontline States and international support groups in Europe, England, America and Australia, is only covered to outline the exile context and the kind of support the PAC received. It has not thoroughly interrogated specific patterns and strategies the organisation employed to engage with the international community. The forms of pressure generated by the kind of relations established have not been defined and elaborated.

The issue about the alliances the exile PAC established with other liberation movements in Southern Africa has been covered only as it relates to the generation of conflict within the PAC. The broad foundations and principles underlying the choice of allies have not been examined. The choice of particular allies contributing to internal conflicts has also not been assessed nor has the role of the allies in helping the PAC put its 'house' in order been dealt with.

What this attests to is that there are other contributing elements to the internal conflict that have been omitted because they could not be squeezed into the relatively tight confines of themes identified in this research. Hence future research on this subject will be useful to uncover and analyze such issues. This research has only removed the veneer of a much deeper, wider and complex research question.

Acronyms

AATO	All–Africa Teachers Organisation
ALC	African Liberation Committee
ANC	African National Congress
APLA	Azanian People’s Liberation Army
APRP	Azanian People’s Revolutionary Party
AU	African Union
AWB	Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging
AZAPO	Azanian People’s Organisation
BAB	Basler Afrika Bibliographien
BCMA	Black Consciousness Movement of Azania
BCP	Basotho Congress Party
BLS	Botswana–Lesotho–Swaziland
BNP	Basutoland National Party
BOSS	Bureau of Security Service
CERN	European Organisation for Nuclear Research
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CODESA	Congress for a Democratic South Africa
CPSA	Communist Party of South Africa
EU	European Community
FLS	Frontline States
FNLA	National Front for the Liberation of Angola
FOFATUSA	Federation of Free African Trade Unions of South Africa
FRELIMO	Liberation Front of Mozambique
GEAR	Growth, Equity and Redistribution
ICU	Industrial and Commercial Workers Union
IDAF	International Defense and Aid Fund
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ISL	International Socialist League
MPLA	People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola
MWT	Marxist Workers Tendency
NAHECS	National Arts and Heritage Cultural Centre
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NP	National Party

OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress of Azania
PAM	Pan Africanist Movement
PF	Patriotic Front
PLAN	People's Liberation Army of Namibia
PMU	Police Mobile Units
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RENAMO	Resistencia Nacional Mozambicana
SA	South Africa
SADCC	Southern African Development Coordinating Conference
SADF	South African Defense Force
SANDEF	South African National Defense Force
SAP	South African Police
SAUF	South African United Front
SAYRCO	South African Youth Revolutionary Council
SCC	State Security Council
SSAK	South African Committee
SWANU	South West Africa National Union
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation
TEC	Transitional Executive Council
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UAR	United Arab Republic
UDF	United Democratic Front
UN / UNO	United Nations Organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNITA	National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola
USIS	United States Information Service
USA	United States of America
WCC	World Council of Churches
WHO	World Health Organisation
WIP	<i>Work in Progress</i>
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African Patriotic Union

List of Illustrations

Most of the illustrations in this book are taken from images in the archives of the Swiss solidarity group *Kämpfendes Afrika* (Zurich 1971–1988), housed at the Basler Afrika Bibliographien. They often are (copies of) photographs without references and were published by the group in their magazine *kämpfendes afrika* (1971–1987). Efforts were made to trace the copyright holders of the illustrations. We apologise for any incomplete or incorrect acknowledgements.

- Fig. 1 “The architect of the policies and programmes on which the PAC has been founded”: Mangaliso Robert Sobukhwe (1924–1978). Quotation and portrait taken from *PAC World, Journal of Pan Africanist Congress of Azania* (Dar es Salaam), March 1980, p. 8.
- Fig. 2 Leaders of the Frontline States: Kenneth Kaunda (Zambia), Julius Nyerere (Tansania) and Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe). (from right to left) Basler Afrika Bibliographien, AA. 5, *Kämpfendes Afrika*.
- Fig. 3 Potlako Kitchener Leballo in the late 1950s. Basler Afrika Bibliographien, AA. 5, *Kämpfendes Afrika*.
- Fig. 4 Vusumzi Make in Switzerland as guest of the Solidarity Group *Kämpfendes Afrika*, October 1980. Basler Afrika Bibliographien, AA. 5, *Kämpfendes Afrika*.
- Fig. 5 John Nyathi Pokela in Zurich in November 1982 en route to the United Nations Organisation in New York. Basler Afrika Bibliographien, AA. 5, *Kämpfendes Afrika*.
- Fig. 6 John Pokela addressing a leadership meeting in the PAC camp Chunya, Tansania. (no date) Basler Afrika Bibliographien, AA. 5, *Kämpfendes Afrika*.
- Fig. 7 Zolile Hamilton Keke in Switzerland in late 1981. Basler Afrika Bibliographien, AA. 5, *Kämpfendes Afrika*.
- Fig. 8 Johnson Mlambo (holding a microphone) in Switzerland, late 1985 or early 1986. Basler Afrika Bibliographien, AA. 5, *Kämpfendes Afrika*.

- Fig. 9 Elliot Mfafa and Mfanekhaya Gqobose as guests of the Swiss Solidarity Group *Kämpfendes Afrika* in Zurich in June 1982. Basler Afrika Bibliographien, AA. 5, Kämpfendes Afrika.
- Fig. 10 The PAC camp Bagamoyo in Tansania, c. 1980. Basler Afrika Bibliographien, AA. 5, Kämpfendes Afrika.
- Fig. 11 The Frontline States leaders Samora Machel (left) (Mozambique) and Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe) supported the military struggle of the PAC. Basler Afrika Bibliographien, AA. 5, Kämpfendes Afrika.
- Fig. 12 APLA soldiers training together with ZANLA forces. (not date, no place) Basler Afrika Bibliographien, AA. 5, Kämpfendes Afrika.
- Fig. 13 Gerald Kondlo, the first commander of APLA. By courtesy of Kwandiwe Kondlo.
- Fig. 14 PAC poster for the 1994 elections in South Africa. Basler Afrika Bibliographien, Poster Collection, X 170. Printer: TAJ Printers.

Maps

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Index

A

- Abuja 271
- Accra 51, 68, 99, 101, 105, 110, 111, 112, 138
- Addis Ababa 52, 113, 114, 115, 130, 141, 166, 244
- African Liberation Committee (ALC) 130, 131, 134, 137, 138, 142, 143, 145
- African Liberation Day Committee 190
- African National Congress (ANC) XII, XIII, 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 18, 19, 24, 25, 28, 33, 34, 35, 38, 41, 43, 49, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 60, 61, 62, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 72, 73, 75, 76, 80, 81, 83, 84, 86, 87, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 96, 97, 98, 100, 102, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 126, 127, 136, 181, 187, 188, 191, 193, 195, 196, 198, 200, 201, 202, 203, 205, 209, 210, 219, 221, 224, 226, 228, 232, 234, 237, 242, 243, 246, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 264, 268, 269, 270, 272, 276, 280, 281, 282, 289, 290, 291
- African Nationalist Council 96
- African Union (AU) 3
- Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) 272
- Afro-Arab Solidarity Group 190
- Alexander, Benny 266, 267
- Alexandra township (Johannesburg) 59
- Algeria 92, 105, 112, 239, 244, 249
- Algiers 110
- All-Africa Teachers Organisation (AATO) 191
- America 12, 19, 21, 46, 49, 50, 67, 69, 90, 91, 126, 127, 172, 190, 279, 286, 294
- Amnesty International 19
- ANC Youth League 49, 52, 54, 56
- Anglo-American group 279
- Angola 13, 72, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 80, 81, 85, 88, 89, 91, 93, 95, 205, 209, 210, 215, 221, 224, 226
- Anthony Lewis 8
- Arusha 23, 24, 27, 82, 140, 151, 168, 230, 233, 248, 250, 294
- Asia 19, 79
- Atteridgeville township (Pretoria) 43
- Australia 176, 190, 294
- Austria 161
- Azanian Peoples' Liberation Army (APLA) 13, 17, 20, 28, 29, 35, 36, 39, 40, 41, 42, 109, 112, 139, 142, 143, 145, 148, 162, 165, 178, 180, 188, 189, 201, 222, 223, 225, 227, 229, 230, 231, 232, 234, 237, 238, 239, 241, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 260, 264, 268, 272, 273, 288, 289, 290, 291
- Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) 1, 4, 197, 270
- Azanian People's Revolutionary Party (APRP) 23, 140, 169, 173, 174, 185, 225, 248, 250, 251, 253
- Azanian Youth Movement 170
- Azania Support Committee 190
- Azikiwe, N. 51

B

- Bagamoyo XIII, 25, 97, 162, 208, 212, 213, 226, 227, 276
Baghdad 159
Bahamas 182
Baran, Paul 223
Barrell, Howard 36, 62, 74, 93, 97, 98
Basler Afrika Bibliographien XI, 19
Basotho Congress Party (BCP) 38, 103, 109, 124, 222
Basotholand (see also Lesotho) 108, 110, 124, 204
Bassie 165
Basutoland National Party (BNP) 124
Bechuanaland (see also Botswana) 68, 102, 111
Beijing (see also Peking) 190
Bele 244
Belgian Congo 12, 65, 105, 112, 205, 239
Belgrade 182
Benguella 210
Benoni 179
Biafra 92
Bidi, Theophilus 249
Biko, Steve 62, 88, 190
Bishop Tutu Refugee Fund 192
Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCMA) 18, 19, 22, 26, 43, 81, 83, 195, 197
Bloemfontein 67, 75, 88, 263
Boipatong 181
Bolnick, Joel 44, 115, 121, 122
Bolnick; Joel 115
Bonhomme House, Maseru (Lesotho) 68, 102
Bophutatswana 270
Botha, Pik 260
Botha, P.W. XI, 88, 89, 92, 260
Botswana (see also Bechuanaland) 12, 38, 39, 75, 77, 78, 80, 81, 83, 84, 85, 88, 89, 93, 99, 101, 105, 110, 111, 126, 130, 134, 141, 150, 161, 183, 192, 203, 205, 247, 291
Britain (see also United Kingdom) 91, 96, 111, 112, 150, 281
Brunel University 266
Bundy, Colin 240, 242
Bunsec, Benny 171, 172, 251
Bureau of African Nationalism 56
Bureau of Security Service (BOSS) 75, 89, 150
Bush, George 262
Butha-buthe 103, 110
Buthelezi, Mangosuthu 195

C

- Cahora Bassa 85
Cairo 58, 68, 99, 101, 110, 111, 138, 161
Cameroon 242
Canada 47, 161, 166, 168, 193
Cape Province 217
Caprivi 247

Carlton Centre (Johannesburg) 207
 Carribean 162
 Carter 18
 Catholic Institute for International Relations 26, 76
 Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) 24, 92, 127, 172
 Chaka 225
 Chicavane, Antonio Azarias 244
 Chikerama, David 96
 China 22, 79, 90, 91, 95, 96, 137, 141, 182, 190, 227, 239, 242, 244, 248, 294
 Chipenda, Daniel 95
 Chissano, Joaquim 95
 Chitepo, Herbert 13, 96, 221, 241
 Chunya Camp (Tanzania) 12, 146, 205, 206, 208, 220, 225, 251
 Ciskei 270, 273
 Cobb, Robin 285
 Coetzee, Kobie 271
 Commonwealth 26, 89, 96, 182, 271
 Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) 4, 53, 72, 269
 Conakry 165
 Congress Alliance 56, 57, 234
 Congress for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) 269, 270, 271
 Congress Youth League 53, 55
 COREMO (see also RENAMO) 44, 94, 244
 Crutcher, John 50
 Cuba 79, 86, 91, 95

D

Dadoo, Yusuf 97, 113
 Dakawa 209, 210
 Dar-es-Salaam 11, 21, 23, 24, 56, 77, 82, 96, 99, 101, 102, 105, 107, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 116, 129, 130, 134, 135, 137, 138, 141, 143, 144, 147, 158, 161, 162, 163, 164, 166, 173, 174, 175, 182, 187, 189, 195, 201, 204, 211, 212, 213, 259, 261, 287
 Davenport, T.R.H. XI
 Daveyton (Benoni) 179
 Davies, S. 53, 55
 De Andrade, Mario 95
 De Beer, Zach 270
 De Klerk, F.W. 5, 185, 258, 263, 268, 273
 De Lille 265
 Democratic Party 90, 270
 Desai, Barney 263, 264
 Diale, Mike 185
 Diphu 108
 Dlova, Vuyisile 266
 Du Bois, W.E.B. 50
 Dubow, Saul 64
 Dukwe Camp (Botswana) 12, 203
 Duncan, Patrick 62, 105
 Durban 57, 65, 67

E

Eastern Cape 2, 18, 39, 56, 121, 156, 222, 235, 273
East London 56, 112, 236
Ebrahim, A.Gora 137, 161, 162, 166, 186, 215
Erasmus, Minister 65
Ethopia 37
Europe XII, 5, 7, 19, 24, 25, 49, 60, 61, 69, 83, 84, 92, 95, 110, 112, 141, 168, 176, 235, 286, 294
European Community (EU) 271
European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN) 177
Evenson, John 47, 94

F

Fazzie, C.J 56, 60
Federation of Free African Trade Unions of South Africa (FOFATUSA) 128, 129, 138, 289
Fezenda 210
Fihla, Raymond 253
Fikeni, Somadoda 47, 48, 71, 72, 94, 293
Finland 135
FNLA (see also National Front for the Liberation of Angola) 91, 95, 205
France 91, 185, 281
Francistown 110, 203
Free State Province 58
FRELIMO (see also Liberation Front of Mozambique) 32, 45, 88, 91, 93, 94, 98, 221, 241, 244
Frontline States (FLS) 22, 46, 70, 72, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 82, 84, 88, 96, 140, 149, 169, 175, 188, 200, 291, 294
Fukuyama, Francis 5, 7
Funeka, Rodney 185

G

Gambia 161
Ganya, Nomakhwezi 161, 206
Garvey, Marcus 51
Gaza 96
Geiss, I. 50
Geneva 109
Gerhart, Gail 18
Germany (West) 37, 38, 182, 260, 281
Ghana 37, 51, 52, 64, 68, 99, 101, 105, 111, 112, 113, 141, 239, 249
Gola, Thobile 161, 185, 253
Goldstone 261, 272
Gqobose, M. Pearce 12, 28, 49, 54, 56, 58, 90, 99, 103, 104, 106, 107, 113, 124, 161, 171, 193, 239
Grinberg, Leon & Rebecca 71
Group of Eminent Persons 182
Growth, Equity and Redistribution (GEAR) 281
Gugulethu township (Cape Town) 27, 60, 112, 264

Guinea 161, 165, 225, 243
Guinea-Bissau 243
Guma, Samuel Madodana 244
Gumede, T 253
Gxekwa, Morgan 252, 253

H

Halpern, Jack 85, 122, 123
Hani, Chris 269
Hanlon, Joseph 44, 76, 80, 81, 89
Harare 15, 44, 45, 56, 112, 187, 190, 192, 257, 259, 263, 268, 274
Harries, Patrick 1
Herbstein, Denis 47
Herschel 156
Hlatswayo, Hughes 60
Hlongwane, James 143
Holden, Roberto 91
Holland 178
Holomisa, Bantu 272
Howard Pim Library (Fort Hare University) 18

I

Ibrahim, Abdullah 218
Ilala residence (Dar-es-Salaam) 147
Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU) 53
Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) 195, 222, 274
International African Service Bureau 51
International Committee of the Red Cross 19
International Defense and Aid Fund (IDAF) 176
International Labour Organisation (ILO) 25
International Socialist League (ISL) 53
Iran 22, 159, 182
Iraq 22, 159, 162, 165, 177, 184
Ireland 162, 184
Isaacman, Allan & Barbara 44
Isaacs, Henry 22, 23, 147, 148, 154, 158, 160, 161, 164, 165, 168, 171, 176, 177, 179, 225, 251
Itumbi Camp – Mbeya (Tanzania) 139, 143, 145

J

Jackson, Maud 185, 188
Jako, Jack 249
Jesus 165
Johannesburg 6, 18, 33, 35, 37, 44, 45, 49, 57, 59, 65, 67, 70, 85, 105, 122, 127, 179, 207, 218, 236, 268
Johnson, Phyllis 45
Jonathan, Leabua 83
Jordan, Bojana 185, 220

K

Kampala 141
Kämpfendes Afrika 19, 190
KaNdoda, Taba 273
Karis, T.G. 18, 39, 40, 50, 54, 57, 58, 59, 60, 63, 67, 101, 102, 118
Katjavivi, Peter 46
Kaunda, Kenneth 77, 78, 82, 96, 113, 141
Keke, Zolile Hamilton 112, 162, 165, 166, 171, 184
Kenya 46, 51, 74, 78, 238
Kenyatta, Jomo 51
Kgalishiwe township (Kimberly) 44
Kgosana, Ata 65, 111
Kgosana, Philip 36, 37, 186
Khama, Seretse 83, 84
Khumalo, Reggie 193
Kidogozero 212
Kijitonyana residence 149
Kikunzu 205
Kingwilliams Town 57, 68, 100, 101, 102, 273
Kinshasa 110, 113, 203, 244
Kitonga 192, 212
Kondlo, Gerald XII, 42, 242, 244, 245, 288
Kondlo, Kwandiwe Merriman XI, XII, XIII
Kongwa 48, 93, 97
Kotane, Moses 97
Kozonguizi, Jariretundu 115
Kungwane, S. 253
Kunz, Egon 71

L

Lady Frere (Transkei) 235
Lady Selborne township (Pretoria) 43, 121
Lagos 105, 110
Lancaster House 7, 45
Langa township 28, 39, 42, 52, 65, 66, 67, 112, 235
Leabua, Jonathan 83
League of Nations 51
League of Yugoslav Communists 182
Leballo, Portlako 4, 11, 24, 37, 38, 40, 41, 44, 57, 59, 62, 68, 101, 102, 103, 104, 107, 109, 111, 115, 117, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 147, 148, 150, 151, 152, 156, 170, 171, 174, 178, 194, 199, 204, 209, 210, 219, 222, 230, 232, 236, 237, 239, 240, 243, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 255, 286, 287, 289, 290, 292
Lechaba, Cynthia 109
Leeman, Benjamin 36, 38, 52, 53, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 64, 68, 75, 101, 102, 103, 105, 109, 112, 122, 123
Lekaje, C.J. 101, 102, 122, 124, 126, 131, 134, 136, 137
Lembede, A.M. 53, 54
Lenin 151, 171, 189, 195, 196, 248, 250, 251, 255
Leopoldville 12, 105, 110, 113, 203, 205

Lesotho (see also Basotholand) 4, 11, 27, 36, 38, 39, 52, 53, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 64, 68, 75, 77,
 80, 81, 83, 84, 88, 89, 93, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110,
 111, 112, 116, 121, 124, 125, 126, 178, 184, 192, 203, 204, 214, 223, 236, 237, 239,
 291
 Lethalo, Patricia 109
 Letlaka, T.T. 56, 105, 124
 Lewis, Anthony 8
 Leys, Colin 47, 48
 Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO) 44, 45, 46
 Liberation Movements Fund 191
 Liberia 144
 Libya 23, 135, 141, 148, 160, 165, 182, 184, 294
 Livingstone 138
 Loabile, M. 105
 Lodge, Tom 1, 12, 18, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 40, 42, 70, 73, 90, 92, 93, 97, 98, 99, 109, 110, 118,
 119, 121, 205, 235, 239
 Lombard, Hans 24, 126
 London 6, 7, 12, 14, 18, 20, 25, 26, 34, 37, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 50, 51, 62, 68, 71, 75, 76, 79,
 80, 82, 85, 86, 94, 97, 99, 100, 101, 102, 110, 112, 115, 131, 168, 177, 184, 188, 190,
 194, 195
 Lovedale 121, 123
 Lusaka 24, 25, 77, 78, 84, 86, 96, 97, 105, 131, 141, 244

M

Maaba, Brown 33
 Maboza, M.G. 60
 Mabusela, Sydney 185, 186
 Machel, Samora 95
 Macmillan, Harold 71, 75, 83, 87
 Macquarrie 123
 Madagascar 58
 Madasa 52, 233, 255
 Madlebe, Synod 247
 Madzunya, Josias 59
 Mafeje, Archie XI, 15, 221, 222
 Mafeteng 103, 110
 Mafole, Ike 154, 162, 163, 166, 185, 186
 Magalela, Mosoeu 162
 Mahlangu, D.A.B. 40
 Mahlangu, Shindo 143
 Mahomo, Nana 12, 36, 37, 60, 68, 90, 100, 101, 111, 113, 115, 135
 Mahoyi 174, 225
 Majola, Siphon 161, 165
 Make, Vusumzi (Vusi) 4, 11, 41, 113, 117, 135, 138, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 147, 148, 150,
 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 161, 162, 164, 173, 183, 184, 200, 216, 230, 252, 287,
 289
 Makhanda, Leaseane 154
 Makiwane, Tennyson 97
 Makoti, E.L. 147, 162, 183
 Makwethu, Clarence 41, 199, 269, 271
 Makwethu, Mlamli 117, 185, 187

Malawi 74, 80, 89
 Malomo 111
 Mamelodi township (Pretoria) 43
 Mampe 111
 Manchester 51, 83
 Mandela, Nelson 6, 53, 97, 115, 123, 257, 258, 266, 274
 Manica 96
 Mantshontsho, D.D.D. 102, 146, 147, 154, 202, 219, 231
 Mao Tsetung 151, 195, 248, 255
 Maphai, Ramudi 185
 Maphalala, Themba 222
 Marcum, John 31, 73, 91
 Martin, David 45
 Marxist Workers Tendency (MWT) 196
 Marx, Karl 44, 45, 46, 151, 171, 189, 195, 196, 198, 248, 250, 251, 255
 Masemola, Jafta 43
 Maseru 11, 12, 18, 21, 39, 68, 85, 99, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 122, 124, 126, 130, 133, 134, 138, 203, 204, 221, 236, 239
 Maseru Secondary Community School 109
 Mashinini, Tsietsie 152, 203
 Masimini, L. 105
 Masondo, Andrew 226
 Massachussets Institute of Technology 36
 Masuguru 208
 Mathabatha, Sello 33, 43
 Mathuthe, G. 105
 Mayende, Peter Gilingwe 1, 266, 272, 274, 277
 Mayibuye archives 18
 Mazimbu 209, 210, 219, 224
 Mbandazayo, Mahlubi 272
 Mbeki, Thabo 2, 282
 Mbekweni location (Paarl) 42
 Mbete, Boy-Boy 253
 Mbeya 12, 97, 126, 134, 138, 139, 140, 206
 Mboko, P.Z. 249
 Mboya, Mack 247
 Mbwawa 212
 Mckinley, Dale 6, 257
 Mda, A.P. 8, 53, 56, 60, 189
 Mdluli, Dan 161, 197, 198, 223, 225
 Menzeleli 244
 Metalworkers Union 115, 135
 Mfafa, Elliot 49, 57, 59, 99, 100, 101, 103, 104, 105, 107, 110, 114, 158, 185, 188, 219, 220, 243
 Mfafa, Mambhele 188
 Mfeya, Mzwandile 272
 Mgagao Camp – Iringa (Tanzania) 12, 206, 207, 208
 Mgaza, Vuyani 113
 Mgweba, Lawrence Themba 105, 111, 152, 162, 167, 176, 184
 Mgxashe, Mxolisi 37, 39, 66

Middle East 113, 160
 Milo 212
 Mketi, Xola 247
 Mkwanazi, Joe 105, 108, 161, 165, 168, 171, 186, 194, 233, 236, 253, 254
 Mkwanazi, R. 105
 Mlambo, Johnson 4, 11, 18, 19, 112, 117, 138, 147, 156, 171, 177, 178, 179, 181, 182, 183,
 184, 185, 187, 188, 189, 190, 193, 194, 197, 198, 201, 214, 220, 223, 225, 230, 231,
 248, 251, 253, 254, 258, 288
 Mlokoti, Christopher 41
 Moabi, J.R. 184, 190
 Modise, Joe 226
 Mofokeng, Dan 252, 253
 Mofokeng, Zakes 185
 Mohachi, Movan 274
 Mohammed, Ismail 270
 Mokgoba, Stanely 43, 156
 Mokoena, Zeblon 173, 244, 249
 Mokone 105
 Molefi, Joe 101, 104
 Molete, Z.B. 60, 101, 102, 104, 109, 111, 124, 137, 139
 Moletsane, George 225
 Molotsi, Peter 12, 37, 50, 57, 60, 68, 100, 101, 111, 113, 135
 Mondlane, Eduardo 95, 221
 Monogotle, Daniel 143
 Moremi, Thobile 161
 Morocco 52, 58, 111
 Morogoro (Mosogoro) 25, 97, 209
 Moseneke, Dikgang 43, 266, 271
 Moseneke, Samuel 43
 Moshi 24, 130, 131, 132, 136, 139, 141, 199, 240, 243, 246, 248, 294
 Motau, Edgar 165
 Motaung, Paxton 165
 Mothopeng, Zephania 29, 38, 43, 58, 60, 105, 117, 185, 187, 262, 263, 265, 268, 269
 Mozambique 32, 34, 44, 45, 46, 72, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 80, 81, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 91, 94, 96,
 180, 221, 241, 244
 Mpendulo, Sadat 272
 Mpendulo, Samora 272
 Mphahlele, Letlapa 39, 203, 206, 207, 208, 218, 253
 MPLA (see also People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola) 86, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 207
 Mpondo, Mahoyi 225
 Mthembu, Thando 272
 Muendane, Ngila Mike 147, 160, 161, 164, 166, 168, 176, 177, 183, 194
 Mugabe, Robert 7, 13, 45, 46, 88, 96, 156, 181
 Müller, Barbara 190, 192
 Munslow, Barry 45
 Musuguru 192
 Muzorewa, Abel 88, 96
 Mvusi, Winston L. 112

N

- Nairobi 141
- Namibia 19, 32, 46, 47, 72, 75, 78, 86, 88, 92, 94, 113, 114, 191, 200, 247, 289
- Nanking Military Academy 242
- Nasser, Abdul Gamal 236
- Natal 53, 57, 217, 233
- National Arts and Heritage Cultural Centre (NAHECS) 18, 19, 25, 27, 29
- National Forum 182
- National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) 91, 95, 205
- National Party (NP) 10, 49, 64, 67, 90, 92, 182, 185, 195, 237, 241, 258, 264, 274
- National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA) 86, 90, 91, 92, 95, 247
- Ncaphayi, Temba 253
- Ncayiyana, D. 105
- Ndibongo 111
- Ndlovu, Gasson 249, 250
- Ndlovu, Vus 161
- Nemadzivhanani, Maxwell 190
- Netherlands 194, 211, 213
- Neto, Agostino 95
- Newitt, Malyn 34, 45, 94
- New Metropole Hotel 138
- New Unity Movement 3
- New York 5, 7, 8, 21, 23, 51, 77, 79, 86, 88, 119, 176, 177, 188, 190
- Ngcobo, A.B. 58, 59, 60, 105, 130, 131, 136, 171, 189, 201
- Ngendane, Selby 57, 60, 189, 201
- Nhlapho, Fezile 161
- Nigeria 51, 105, 110, 113, 177, 182, 213, 271
- Nkavandame 95
- Nkoana, M. 101, 105
- Nkomati 76, 86, 180
- Nkomo, A.C. 220
- Nkomo, Joshua 95, 144
- Nkonyeni, Willie 185, 253
- Nkrumah, Kwame 51, 52, 68, 112, 113
- Nkula, Keke 165
- Nkula, Mlindazwe 162
- Nkwinti, Gugile 278
- Nobre, Eusebio Gonclaves 244
- Nogners, Emildo Lopes 244
- Nokwe, Duma 97
- Nomdolo, Vusi 161, 165, 184
- Non-Aligned Movement 159, 271
- Nongauza 111
- North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) 79
- Northcrest (Umtata) 272
- Northern Transvaal 88
- Norway 178, 211, 213
- Novo Catengue Camp (Angola) 210
- Ntabeni, A. 253
- Ntantala, Fitho 188

Ntantala, Templeton 23, 24, 27, 56, 104, 109, 114, 124, 134, 137, 138, 140, 151, 168, 169, 173, 185, 188, 222, 225, 230, 239, 248, 249, 251, 290
 Ntantala, T.M. 188
 Ntikinca, Vuma 254
 Ntlapho, Fezile 148
 Ntlapho, Gilbert 143
 Ntloedibe, Elias 38, 104, 141, 146, 147, 150, 154, 287
 Ntoni, Oscar 244
 Ntsele, Peter 58
 Nujoma, Sam 48, 94, 290
 Nyanga township 65, 67, 234
 Nyaose, J.D. 60, 105, 128, 129, 130, 137, 139, 192, 289
 Nyasaland 65
 Nyerere, Julius 77, 78, 82, 113, 140

O

OAU Liberation Committee 24, 70, 78, 93, 96, 101, 102, 122, 124, 129, 131, 132, 135, 136, 140, 142, 175, 176, 191, 192, 199, 208, 239, 240, 242, 289, 292
 Organisation of African Unity (OAU) 3, 21, 22, 24, 47, 48, 52, 70, 77, 78, 79, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 101, 122, 129, 130, 131, 132, 134, 135, 136, 137, 140, 141, 142, 143, 145, 160, 169, 175, 176, 191, 192, 199, 208, 239, 240, 242, 244, 257, 260, 266, 268, 289, 291, 292, 294
 Orlando township (Johannesburg) 49, 58, 105

P

Palweni, Moss 186
 Pan Africanist Movement (PAM) 196
 Paris 51, 182
 Parker, Aida 8
 Peires, Jeff XI
 Peking (see also Beijing) 242, 249
 People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) 94
 People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) 86, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 207
 Petersen, Count 146, 149, 183
 Phama, Victor Sabelo 99, 162, 171, 183, 247, 251, 252, 253, 264, 273
 Pheko, Motsukoe 123
 Piliso, Mzwandile 226
 Pivani region 212
 Plaatjie, Thami ka 33, 41, 42, 101
 Pogrand, Benjamin 44
 Pokela, Nyathi John 4, 11, 14, 18, 19, 38, 56, 104, 110, 112, 113, 117, 124, 127, 135, 138, 140, 145, 147, 150, 151, 153, 155, 156, 158, 160, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 170, 171, 173, 174, 175, 177, 178, 181, 182, 184, 185, 188, 189, 194, 200, 209, 220, 224, 225, 230, 232, 248, 252, 253, 258, 276, 288, 291
 Polokwane 281
Pogo 13, 18, 19, 28, 35, 38, 39, 42, 43, 62, 64, 68, 109, 112, 156, 229, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 241, 243, 245, 252, 255, 287, 290
 Port Elizabeth 12, 28, 39, 49, 54, 56, 58, 67, 90
 Port St. Johns 236

Portugal 45, 74, 77, 79, 81, 85, 95, 244
Presbyterian Church of South Africa 273
Prior, Andrew 72
Program to Combat Racism 190

Q

Qhasana 244
Qoba 134
Quacha's Neck 204
Quatro Camp (Angola) 209, 226
Queenstown 273

R

Raboroko, Peter 49, 56, 57, 59, 60, 64, 111, 129, 130, 137, 139, 184
Radebe, Erret 147, 162
Ramaphosa, Cyril 271
Ranger, Terence 45, 242
Reagan, Ronald 90, 260
Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) 281
Rembrandt group 279
Republican Party 90
Resistencia Nacional Mozambicana (RENAMO) 44, 86, 88
Rhodesia (see also Zimbabwe) 46, 74, 75, 77, 79, 88, 96, 244
Rio Donge 210
Robben Island 8, 18, 41, 99, 156, 168, 171, 179, 185, 200
Roberto, Holden 91
Rodney 189
Rotho 125
Ruacana (Angola) 85
Ruitenberg, Herbart 194
Ruvu Camp XIII, 12, 185, 192, 202, 203, 206, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 226, 228

S

Sabatana, Mncedisi 225
Samuels, Raphael 26, 100
SA Mutual 279
Sanlam 279
Saul, John 221
Savimbi, Jonas 91, 247
Scandinavia 161
Schabort, P.J. 270
Seapoint (Maseru) 109
Sea View Flats (Dar-es- Salaam) 143
Sebokeng 181
Seleka, Cutter 262
Sellstrom 113, 114
Selous Scouts 88
Senkobo 244

Seroke, Jackie 273
 Shabalala, Sipho 266, 267
 Shain, Y. 72
 Shamyrra, Nathan 72
 Shangai 207
 Shange, Sidibeng 161
 Sharpeville 18, 62, 64, 66, 67, 68, 104, 181, 218, 243, 245
 Shoba, Puledi 161
 Sibeko, David 19, 41, 138, 141, 142, 143, 145, 147, 154, 173
 Sibeko, Elizabeth 154, 161, 177, 194
 Sibeko, E.R. 147
 Siboto 111
 Sifora, V. 57
 Sifuba, Joyce 185, 188
 Simonstown 65
 Singapore 192
 Sisulu, Walter 53
 Sithole, Ndabaningi 46, 96
 Skamanie, Ellias 102, 103
 Slovo, Joe 6
 Smith, Ian 46, 88, 96
 Smith, Susana 47
 Sobukhwe Forum 171, 189, 195, 196, 197, 201, 251, 294
 Sobukhwe, Robert Mangaliso 8, 12, 21, 29, 38, 40, 44, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60, 61, 63, 64, 65, 69,
 100, 101, 104, 105, 113, 122, 123, 126, 133, 151, 171, 189, 195, 196, 197, 200, 201,
 213, 218, 235, 236, 251, 287, 294
 Social Democratic Laboremus Association 115
 Social Democratic Party 115
 Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College 209, 219, 224
 Sondlo, Benedict 161, 174
 Soni, Titus 143
 Sono, Temba 32
 Sorsa, Kalevi 136
 South African Committee (SSAK) 115
 South African Communist Party (see also Communist Party of South Africa) 4, 72, 269
 South African Council of Churches 273
 South African Defence Force (SADF) 75, 85, 86
 South African Foundation 114
 South African Indian Congress 56, 100, 113
 South African Irish Regiment 75
 South African National Defense Force (SANDF) 244, 274
 South African Police (SAP) 134, 218
 South African Youth Revolutionary Council (SAYRCO) 203
 Southern African Customs Union (SACU) 83, 88
 Southern African Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) 79, 81, 82, 83, 84, 86, 87,
 88, 89
 Southern Transvaal 64, 66
 South West Africa National Union (SWANU) 100, 113, 115
 South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) 32, 44, 46, 47, 75, 76, 81, 91, 92, 93, 94,
 98, 114, 191, 198, 200, 247, 289
 Soviet Union 43, 76, 79, 90, 91, 95, 241, 263, 267, 284

Soweto XIII, 28, 39, 43, 56, 59, 88, 139, 142, 203, 210, 218, 233, 250, 255, 256, 273, 294
 Spain 192
 Stalin, Josef 223
 State Security Council (SCC) 89
 Streek, Barry 8, 275
 Sudan 162
 Sukuti 83
 Swaziland 68, 75, 77, 80, 81, 83, 84, 88, 89, 93, 99, 102, 105, 134, 205, 247, 291
 Sweden 18, 112, 113, 114, 115, 135, 182
 Sweezy 223
 Swiss Red Cross 177
 Switzerland XI, 1, 19, 161, 185, 190, 192
 Sylvester-Williams, H. 51
 Syria 160, 165, 185

T

Tambo, Oliver 53, 68, 90, 92, 97, 113, 115, 224, 260
 Tanzania XIII, 4, 11, 12, 13, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 27, 37, 38, 39, 46, 48, 56, 74, 76, 77, 78, 80, 81, 82, 83, 88, 89, 90, 93, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 101, 102, 106, 107, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 116, 117, 126, 129, 130, 132, 134, 136, 138, 140, 142, 143, 144, 146, 151, 153, 158, 161, 166, 169, 174, 175, 177, 189, 190, 192, 197, 200, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 208, 209, 211, 212, 213, 215, 217, 218, 220, 222, 225, 228, 230, 233, 251, 276, 287, 289, 290, 291, 292, 294
 Tanzanian Christian Refugee Service 211
 Tatu, Abraham 143
 Tete 96
 Texas 161
 Thatcher, Margaret 96, 262
 Tickner 243
 Toboti, Walters 56, 109, 114, 185
 Tolbert 144
 Tongogara, Josiah 241
 Toronto 190
 Transitional Executive Council (TEC) 274
 Transkei 42, 62, 105, 112, 156, 235, 247, 254, 270, 272, 273
 Transvaal 57, 58, 67, 88, 255
 Tripoli 23
 Trotsky 195
 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) XI, 1, 19, 108, 225, 244, 245, 248, 254
 Tunisia 52, 160
 Tutu, Desmond 273
 Twala 244

U

Uganda 23, 37, 78, 173, 182, 185, 205
 Uitenhage 181
 Umkhonto weSizwe 35, 68, 97, 232, 237, 244, 268, 269
 Umtata 28, 54, 102, 189, 251, 272
 United Arab Republic (UAR) 137
 United Democratic Front (UDF) 181, 197

United Kingdom (see also Britain) 19, 24, 162, 164, 166, 168, 184, 190, 194
 United Nations Development Program (UNDP) 211, 214
 United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) 19, 110, 211
 United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) 212
 United Nations Organisation (UNO) 3, 19, 21, 22, 25, 26, 29, 47, 67, 91, 119, 141, 154, 160, 162, 165, 166, 168, 171, 177, 179, 182, 211, 212, 214, 215, 220, 271, 294
 United States Information Service (USIS) 127
 United States of Africa 58
 United States of America (USA) 76, 90, 91, 92, 95, 99, 141, 161, 162, 168, 190, 192, 193, 195, 267, 281
 University of Basel XI
 University of Cape Town XI, 18, 37, 65
 University of Fort Hare 11, 18, 19
 University of Johannesburg XI, 3, 33
 University of Liberia 144
 University of the Western Cape 19
 University of Transkei XI
 UN Special Committee Against Apartheid 215
 Uppsala 113, 114, 115
 Utete, C.B.M. 46

V

Vanda, J. 185, 220
 Venda 270
 Venter, D. 76, 77, 79, 81, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89
 Verwoerd, Hendrik 8, 65, 89
 Vigne, Randolph 47
 Villa Peri 42, 244, 246, 247, 249
 Vitshima, Mawethu 247
 Vorster, B.J. 83, 88, 89, 96, 103, 144

W

Wankie 97, 244, 246
 West Africa 46, 75, 113, 114, 150, 154, 161, 168
 Western Cape 29, 37, 41, 64, 65, 66
 West Indies 69
 Wilson, Monica 18
 World Council of Churches (WCC) 19, 26, 172, 190
 World Health Organisation (WHO) 215
 World Trade Centre (Johannesburg) 274

Y

Yonna, Mpazamo 184
 Yose, Sandiso 272
 Yugoslavia 182, 208

Z

Zaire 37, 78, 203
 Zambezi 244

Zambia 46, 47, 74, 75, 77, 78, 80, 81, 82, 83, 88, 89, 90, 93, 95, 96, 105, 113, 131, 165, 205, 215, 244, 247
ZANU (PF) 23, 45, 169, 188
Zanzibar 82
Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) 46, 96
Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) 13, 22, 23, 32, 44, 45, 46, 81, 88, 91, 93, 95, 96, 98, 169, 188, 203, 207, 221, 241, 242, 245, 260, 289
Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) 88, 91, 95, 97, 203, 242, 243
Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Party (ZIPRA) 244
Zimbabwe (see also Rhodesia) 13, 23, 32, 44, 45, 46, 72, 75, 76, 77, 78, 80, 81, 85, 88, 89, 91, 95, 96, 110, 144, 156, 165, 169, 173, 182, 185, 188, 190, 192, 203, 205, 241, 242, 243, 260, 266, 273, 289
Zonyani, Rufus 253
Zulu, Enoch 165, 166, 244, 252, 254
Zwane, Reuben 143
Zweni, Wilberforce 253

This book is a long-overdue history of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) and the rise of the Africanist ideology in South Africa. From its formation in 1959, the PAC underground inside South Africa and in exile shaped the dynamics of the anti-apartheid movement and liberation struggle by framing alternative ideologies. Kwandiwe Kondlo analyses the radical traditions, the structural contradictions and the internal conflicts of this rival to the African National Congress (ANC), South Africa's dominant liberation organisation. The contributions of some of the PAC leaders, including Robert Sobukhwe, Potlake Kitchener Leballo, Vusumzi Make and John Nyathi Pokela, are reconstructed as are the PAC's experiences in exile and the strategies pursued by its military wing, the Azanian People's Liberation Party (APLA). The role of the PAC in the power-sharing negotiations leading to the historic 1994 elections in South Africa round off the narrative.

"Dr Kondlo uses PAC documents and veterans' memories to produce an innovative history of the movement ..., the first academically reputable history of the PAC from its turbulent beginning in 1959 to the twilight years of the revolution that ended in 1994." *Patrick Harries, University of Basel*

The PAC story is a highly controversial one, as the perspectives are wide and various. This book seeks to present a balanced picture which includes diverse views in a comprehensive narrative.

Kwandiwe Merriman Kondlo obtained his PhD from the University of Johannesburg. His doctorate covered exile liberation movements in southern Africa, with a special focus on the PAC. He is currently the Executive Director of the Programme of Democracy and Governance at the Human Science Research Council in South Africa. He is also Visiting Adjunct Professor at the University of Witwatersrand's School of Public and Development Management where he teaches aspects of South Africa's public policy, and an Honorary Research Associate attached to the NRF Chair in the Department of Sociology at the University of Cape Town.